

second edition

# Dictionary of Nursing

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**NURSING**

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# Preface

This fully-updated dictionary provides the user with a complete guide to the vocabulary in current use by nurses and other health care professionals.

Over 11,000 terms are explained in clear, straightforward English. Areas covered include diseases and conditions, instruments, drugs, treatments and patient care, as well as medical specialisations such as surgery, psychiatry and physiotherapy. Many informal and everyday terms used by patients in describing their condition are also included.

A useful supplement also contains a guide to anatomical terms, illustrated with clear and simple diagrams.

Thanks are due to Glenda Cornwell, Rosemary Cook, Stephen Curtis, Fiona McIntosh, Lynn Davy and Dinah Jackson for their advice on the first edition of this text, and to Kathryn Jones for her helpful comments during the production of this second edition.

## ***Publishers' Note:***

While every effort has been made to be as accurate as possible, the author, advisors, editors and publishers of this book cannot be held liable for any errors and omissions, or actions that may be taken as a consequence of using it.

# Pronunciation

The following symbols have been used to show the pronunciation of the main words in the dictionary.

Stress is indicated by a main stress mark ( ' ) and a secondary stress mark ( , ). Note that these are only guides, as the stress of the word changes according to its position in the sentence.

## *Vowels*

æ	back
ɑ:	harm
ɒ	stop
aɪ	type
aʊ	how
aɪə	hire
aʊə	hour
ɔ:	course
ɔɪ	annoy
e	head
eə	fair
eɪ	make
eʊ	go
ɜ:	word
i:	keep
ɪ	happy
ə	about
ɪ	fit
ɪə	near
u	annual
u:	pool
ʊ	book
ʊə	tour
ʌ	shut

## *Consonants*

b	buck
d	dead
ð	other
dʒ	jump
f	fare
g	gold
h	head
j	yellow
k	cab
l	leave
m	mix
n	nil
ŋ	sing
p	print
r	rest
s	save
ʃ	shop
t	take
tʃ	change
θ	theft
v	value
w	work
x	loch
ʒ	measure
z	zone

# A

**AA** *abbreviation* Alcoholics Anonymous

**A & E** /,eɪ ənd 'i:/, **A & E department** /,eɪ ənd 'i: dɪpɑ:tmənt/ *noun* same as **accident and emergency department**

**A & E medicine** /,eɪ ənd 'i: ,med(ə)sɪn/ *noun* the medical procedures used in A & E departments

**ab-** /æb/ *prefix* away from

**ABC** /,eɪ bi: 'si:/ *noun* the basic initial checks of a casualty's condition. Full form **airway, breathing and circulation**

**abdomen** /'æbdəmən/ *noun* a space inside the body below the diaphragm, above the pelvis and in front of the spine, containing the stomach, intestines, liver and other vital organs ○ *pain in the abdomen* (NOTE: For other terms referring to the abdomen, see words beginning with **coeli-, coelio-**.)

**abdomin-** /æbdəmɪn/ *prefix* same as **abdomino-** (used before vowels)

**abdominal** /æb'dɒmɪn(ə)l/ *adjective* located in the abdomen, or relating to the abdomen

**abdominal aorta** /æb,dɒmɪn(ə)l eɪ'ɔ:tə/ *noun* the part of the aorta which lies between the diaphragm and the point where the aorta divides into the iliac arteries. See illustration at **KIDNEY** in Supplement

**abdominal cavity** /æb,dɒmɪn(ə)l 'kævɪti/ *noun* the space in the body below the chest

**abdominal pain** /æb'dɒmɪn(ə)l peɪn/ *noun* pain in the abdomen caused by indigestion or more serious disorders

**abdominal viscera** /æb,dɒmɪn(ə)l 'vɪsərə/ *plural noun* the organs which are contained in the abdomen, e.g. the stomach, liver and intestines

**abdominal wall** /æb'dɒmɪn(ə)l wɔ:l/ *noun* muscular tissue which surrounds the abdomen

**abdomino-** /æbdəmɪnəʊ/ *prefix* referring to the abdomen

**abdominopelvic** /æb,dɒmɪnəʊ'pelvɪk/ *adjective* referring to the abdomen and pelvis

**abdominoperineal** /æb,dɒmɪnəʊpəri'ni:əl/ *adjective* referring to the abdomen and perineum

**abdominoperineal excision** /æb,dɒmɪnəʊpəri,ni:əl ɪk'sɪʒ(ə)n/ *noun* a surgical

operation that involves cutting out tissue in both the abdomen and the perineum

**abdominoposterior** /æb,dɒmɪnəʊpɪ'stɪəriəl/ *adjective* referring to a position of a fetus in the uterus, where the fetus's abdomen is facing the mother's back

**abdominoscopy** /æb,dɒmɪ'nɒskəpi/ *noun* an internal examination of the abdomen, usually with an endoscope

**abdominothoracic** /æb,dɒmɪnəʊθɔ:'ræsɪk/ *adjective* referring to the abdomen and thorax

**abduce** /æb'dju:s/ *verb* same as **abduct**

**abducens nerve** /æb'dju:s(ə)nɪz ,nɜ:v/ *noun* the sixth cranial nerve, which controls the muscle which makes the eyeball turn outwards

**abducent** /æb'dju:s(ə)nt/ *adjective* referring to a muscle which brings parts of the body away from each other or moves them away from the central line of the body or a limb. Compare **adducent**

**abduct** /æb'dʌkt/ *verb* (of a muscle) to pull a leg or arm in a direction which is away from the centre line of the body, or to pull a toe or finger away from the central line of a leg or arm. Compare **adduct**

**abduction** /æb'dʌkʃən/ *noun* the movement of a part of the body away from the centre line of the body or away from a neighbouring part. Opposite **adduction**. See illustration at **ANATOMICAL TERMS** in Supplement

**abductor** /æb'dʌktə/, **abductor muscle** /æb'dʌktə ,mʌs(ə)l/ *noun* a muscle which pulls a part of the body away from the centre line of the body or away from a neighbouring part. Opposite **adductor**

**aberrant** /æ'berənt/ *adjective* not usual or expected

**aberration** /,æbə'reɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* an action or growth which is not usual or expected

**ablation** /ə'bleɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the removal of an organ or of a part of the body by surgery

**abnormal** /æb'nɔ:m(ə)l/ *adjective* not usual ○ *abnormal behaviour* ○ *an abnormal movement*

**abnormality** /,æbnɔ:'mælti/ *noun* a form or condition which is not usual (NOTE: For other

terms referring to abnormality, see words beginning with **terat-**, **terato-**.)

**abocclusion** /,æbɒ'klu:ʒ(ə)n/ *noun* a condition in which the teeth in the top and bottom jaws do not touch

**abort** /ə'bo:t/ *verb* to eject an embryo or fetus, or to cause an embryo or fetus to be ejected, and so end a pregnancy before the fetus is fully developed

**abortifacient** /ə,bɔ:tɪ'feɪf(ə)nt/ *noun* a drug or instrument which provokes an abortion

**abortion** /ə'bo:tʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a situation where a fetus leaves the uterus before it is fully developed, especially during the first 28 weeks of pregnancy, or a procedure which causes this to happen

**abortive** /ə'bo:tɪv/ *adjective* not successful ○ *an abortive attempt*

**abortus** /ə'bo:təs/ *noun* a fetus which is expelled during an abortion or miscarriage

**abortus fever** /ə'bo:təs ,fɪ:vəl/ *noun* same as **brucellosis**

**ABO system** /,eɪ bi: 'əʊ ,sɪstəm/ *noun* a system of classifying blood groups. ▽ **blood group**

**abrasion** /ə'breɪʒ(ə)n/ *noun* a condition in which the surface of the skin has been rubbed off by a rough surface and bleeds

**abreaction** /,æbri'ækʃən/ *noun* the treatment of a person with a neurosis by making him or her think again about past bad experiences

**abruptio placentae** /ə,bɾʌptɪəʊ plə'senti:/ *noun* an occasion when the placenta suddenly comes away from the uterus earlier than it should, often causing shock and bleeding

**abscess** /'æbses/ *noun* a painful swollen area where pus forms ○ *She had an abscess under a tooth.* ○ *The doctor decided to lance the abscess.* (NOTE: The formation of an abscess is often accompanied by a high temperature. The plural is **abscesses**.)

**absorbable suture** /əb,zɔ:bəb(ə)l 'su:tʃə/ *noun* a suture which will eventually be absorbed into the body, and does not need to be removed

**absorbent cotton** /əb,zɔ:bənt 'kɒt(ə)n/ *noun* a soft white material used as a dressing to put on wounds

**absorption** /əb'zɔ:pʃən/ *noun* the process by which a liquid is taken into a solid

**abstinence** /'æbstɪnəns/ *noun* a deliberate act of not doing something over a period of time, especially not eating or drinking ○ *abstinence from alcohol*

**abulia** /ə'bu:lɪə/ *noun* a lack of willpower

**abuse** *noun* /ə'bju:z/ **1.** the act of using something wrongly ○ *the abuse of a privilege* **2.** the illegal use of a drug or overuse of alcohol ○ *substance abuse* **3.** same as **child abuse** **4.** bad treatment of a person ○ *physical abuse* ○ *sexual abuse* ■ *verb* /ə'bju:z/ **1.** to use something

wrongly ○ *Heroin and cocaine are drugs which are commonly abused.* **2.** to treat someone badly ○ *sexually abused children* ○ *He had physically abused his wife and child.*

**a.c.** *adverb* (used on prescriptions) before food. Full form **ante cibum**

**acanthosis** /ə,kæn'thəʊsɪs/ *noun* a disease of the prickle cell layer of the skin, where warts appear on the skin or inside the mouth

**acapnia** /eɪ'kæpniə/ *noun* the condition of not having enough carbon dioxide in the blood and tissues

**acaricide** /ə'kærɪsaɪd/ *noun* a substance which kills mites or ticks

**acatalasia** /eɪ,kætə'leɪziə/ *noun* an inherited condition which results in a lack of catalase in all tissue

**accessory** /ək'sesəri/ *noun* something which helps something else to happen or operate, but may not be very important in itself ■ *adjective* helping something else to happen or operate

**accident** /'æksɪd(ə)nt/ *noun* **1.** an unpleasant event which happens suddenly and harms someone's health ○ *She had an accident in the kitchen and had to go to hospital.* ○ *Three people were killed in the accident on the motorway.* **2.** chance, or something which happens by chance ○ *I met her by accident at the bus stop.*

**accidental injury** /,æksɪd(ə)nt 'ɪndʒəri/ *noun* an injury that happens to someone in an accident

**accident and emergency department** /,æksɪd(ə)nt ənd ɪ'mɜ:dʒənsɪ di,ptɑ:tmənt/ *noun* the part of a hospital which deals with people who need urgent treatment because they have had accidents or are in sudden serious pain. Abbreviation **A & E**

**accident form** /'æksɪd(ə)nt fɔ:m/, **accident report form** /,æksɪd(ə)nt rɪ'pɔ:t fɔ:m/ *noun* a form to be filled in with details of an accident

**accident prevention** /,æksɪd(ə)nt prɪ 'venʃən/ *noun* the work of taking action or changing procedures to prevent accidents from happening

**accident ward** /'æksɪd(ə)nt wɔ:d/ *noun* a ward for urgent accident victims. Also called **casualty ward**

**accommodation** /ə,kɒmə'deɪʃ(ə)n/, **accommodation reflex** /ə,kɒmə'deɪʃ(ə)n ,rɪ'fleks/ *noun* (of the lens of the eye) the ability to focus on objects at different distances, using the ciliary muscle

**accommodative squint** /ə,kɒmədeɪtɪv 'skwɪnt/ *noun* a squint when the eye is trying to focus on an object which is very close

**accouchement** /ə'ku:fmənt/ *noun* the time when a woman is being looked after because her baby is being born, or has just been born

**accountability** /ə,kaʊntə'bɪlɪti/ *noun* the state of being responsible to someone else for an action  
○ *developing and maintaining standards of accountability*

**accountable** /ə'kaʊntəb(ə)l/ *adjective* responsible to someone else for an action ○ *accountable to the public*

**accretion** /ə'kri:f(ə)n/ *noun* a gradual increase in size, as through growth or external addition ○ *an accretion of calcium around the joint*

**acebutolol** /,æsi'bju:təbl/ *noun* a drug which reduces both the heart rate and how strongly the heart muscles contract, used in the treatment of high blood pressure and irregular heart rhythms

**ACE inhibitor** /'eɪs ɪn,hɪbɪtə/ *noun* same as **angiotensin-converting enzyme inhibitor**

**acephalus** /eɪ'sefələs/ *noun* a fetus born without a head

**acetabuloplasty** /,æsi'tæbjʊləs,plæsti/ *noun* a surgical operation to repair or rebuild the acetabulum

**acetabulum** /,æsi'tæbjʊləm/ *noun* the part of the pelvic bone, shaped like a cup, into which the head of the femur fits to form the hip joint. Also called **cotyloid cavity** (NOTE: The plural is **acetabula**.)

**acetaminophen** /ə,sɪ:tə'mɪnəfən/ *noun* US same as **paracetamol**

**acetazolamide** /ə,sɪ:tə'zɒləmaɪd/ *noun* a drug which helps a person to produce more urine, used in the treatment of oedema, glaucoma and epilepsy

**acetonaemia** /ə,sɪ:təʊ'ni:mɪə/ same as **keto-naemia**

**acetone** /'æsɪtəʊn/ *noun* a colourless volatile substance formed in the body after vomiting or during diabetes. † **ketone**

**acetonuria** /ə,sɪ:təʊ'nju:riə/ *noun* the presence of acetone in the urine, shown by the fact that the urine gives off a sweet smell

**acetylcholine** /,æsɪ'taɪl'kəʊli:n/ *noun* a substance released from nerve endings, which allows nerve impulses to move from one nerve to another or from a nerve to the organ it controls

COMMENT: Acetylcholine receptors are of two types, muscarinic, found in parasympathetic post-ganglionic nerve junctions, and nicotinic, found at neuromuscular junctions and in autonomic ganglia. Acetylcholine acts on both types of receptors, but other drugs act on one or the other.

**acetylcoenzyme A** /,æsɪ'taɪlkəʊ,enzam 'eɪ/ *noun* a compound produced in the metabolism of carbohydrates, fatty acids and amino acids

**acetylsalicylic acid** /,æsɪ'taɪl,sæləsɪlɪk 'æsɪd/ *noun* † **aspirin**

**achalasia** /,ækə'leɪziə/ *noun* the condition of being unable to relax the muscles

**ache** /eɪk/ *noun* a pain which goes on for a time, but is not very severe ○ *He complained of various aches and pains.* ■ *verb* to have a pain in part of the body ○ *His tooth ached so much he went to the dentist.*

**Achilles tendon** /ə,kɪlɪz 'tendən/ *noun* a tendon at the back of the ankle which connects the calf muscles to the heel and which acts to pull up the heel when the calf muscle is contracted

**achillorrhaphy** /,ækɪ'lɔ:ɾəfi/ *noun* a surgical operation to stitch a torn Achilles tendon

**achillotomy** /,ækɪ'lɔ:təmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to divide the Achilles tendon

**achlorhydria** /,eɪklɔ:'haɪdrɪə/ *noun* a condition in which the gastric juices do not contain hydrochloric acid, a symptom of stomach cancer or pernicious anaemia

**acholia** /eɪ'kəʊliə/ *noun* the absence or failure of the secretion of bile

**acholuria** /,eɪkɔ'lʊ:riə/ *noun* the absence of bile colouring in the urine

**acholuric jaundice** /,eɪkə'lʊ:rɪk 'dʒɔ:ndɪs/ *noun* a disease where unusually round red blood cells form, leading to anaemia, an enlarged spleen and the formation of gallstones. Also called **hereditary spherocytosis**

**achondroplasia** /,eɪkɒndrə'pleɪziə/ *noun* an inherited condition in which the long bones in the arms and legs do not grow fully while the rest of the bones in the body grow as usual, resulting in dwarfism

**achromatopsia** /,eɪkrəʊmə'tɒpsɪə/ *noun* a rare condition in which a person cannot see any colours, but only black, white and shades of grey

**achy** /'eɪki/ *adjective* feeling aches all over the body (*informal*)

**aciclovir** /eɪ'saɪkləʊvɪə/ *noun* a drug that is effective against herpesviruses. Also called **acyclovir**

**acidaemia** /,æsi'di:mɪə/ *noun* a state in which the blood has too much acid in it. It is a feature of untreated severe diabetes.

**acid-base balance** /,æsɪd 'beɪs,bəleɪns/ *noun* the balance between acid and base, i.e. the pH level, in plasma

**acidity** /ə'sɪdɪti/ *noun* **1.** the level of acid in a liquid ○ *The alkaline solution may help to reduce acidity.* **2.** same as **hyperacidity**

**acidosis** /,æsi'dəʊsɪs/ *noun* **1.** a condition when there are more acid waste products such as urea than usual in the blood because of a lack of alkali **2.** same as **acidity**

**acidotic** /,æsi'dɒtɪk/ *adjective* relating to acidosis

**acid reflux** /,æsɪd 'rɪ:fɪlks/ *noun* a condition caused by a faulty muscle in the oesophagus allowing the acid in the stomach to pass into the oesophagus

**acid stomach** /,æsid 'stʌmək/ *noun* same as **hyperacidity**

**acinus** /'æsinəs/ *noun* **1.** a tiny sac which forms part of a gland **2.** part of a lobule in the lung (NOTE: The plural is **acini**.)

**acne** /'ækni/ *noun* an inflammation of the sebaceous glands during puberty which makes blackheads appear on the skin, usually on the face, neck and shoulders. These blackheads often then become infected. ○ *She is using a cream to clear up her acne.*

**acne rosacea** /,ækni rəu'zeɪʃəl/ *noun* same as **rosacea**

**acne vulgaris** /,ækni vɒl'gɑ:ris/ *noun* same as **acne**

**acoustic** /ə'ku:stɪk/ *adjective* relating to sound or hearing

**acoustic nerve** /ə'ku:stɪk nɜ:v/ *noun* the eighth cranial nerve which governs hearing and balance

**acquired** /ə'kwɪəd/ *adjective* referring to a condition which is neither congenital nor hereditary and which a person develops after birth in reaction to his or her environment

**acquired immunity** /ə'kwɪəd ɪ'mju:nɪti/ *noun* an immunity which a body acquires from having caught a disease or from immunisation, not one which is congenital

**acquired immunodeficiency syndrome** /ə'kwɪəd ɪ'mju:nədi'fɪʃ(ə)nsi ˌsɪndrəʊm/, **acquired immune deficiency syndrome** /ə'kwɪəd ɪmˌju:n dɪ'fɪʃ(ə)nsi ˌsɪndrəʊm/ *noun* a viral infection which breaks down the body's immune system. Abbreviation **AIDS**. ♢ **HIV**

**acrivastine** /ə'krɪvə stɪ:n/ *noun* a drug which reduces the amount of histamine produced by the body. It is used in the treatment of rhinitis, urticaria and eczema.

**acro-** /ækrəʊ/ *prefix* referring to a point or tip

**acrocephalia** /,ækrəʊsə'feɪliə/ *noun* same as **oxycephaly**

**acrocyanosis** /,ækrəʊsɪə'nəʊsɪs/ *noun* a blue coloration of the extremities, i.e. the fingers, toes, ears and nose, which is due to poor circulation

**acrodynia** /,ækrəʊ'dɪniə/ *noun* a children's disease, caused by an allergy to mercury, where the child's hands, feet and face swell and become pink, and the child is also affected with fever and loss of appetite. Also called **erythroedema**, **pink disease**

**acromegaly** /,ækrəʊ'megəli/ *noun* a disease caused by excessive quantities of growth hormone produced by the pituitary gland, causing a slow enlargement of the hands, feet and jaws in adults

**acromioclavicular** /,ækrəʊmərəʊklə'vɪkjʊlə/ *adjective* relating to the acromion and the clavicle

**acromion** /ə'krəʊmiən/ *noun* the pointed top of the scapula, which forms the tip of the shoulder

**acronyx** /'ækrɒnɪks, 'eɪkrɒnɪks/ *noun* a condition in which a nail grows into the flesh

**acroparaesthesia** /,ækrəʊpærɪs'ti:ziə/ *noun* a condition in which the patient experiences sharp pains in the arms and numbness in the fingers after sleep

**acrophobia** /,ækrə'fəʊbiə/ *noun* a fear of heights

**acrosclerosis** /,ækrəʊsklə'rəʊsɪs/ *noun* sclerosis which affects the extremities

**ACTH** *abbreviation* adrenocorticotrophic hormone

**actinomycin** /,æktɪnəʊ'maɪsɪn/ *noun* an antibiotic used in the treatment of children with cancer

**actinomycosis** /,æktɪnəʊmaɪ'kəʊsɪs/ *noun* a fungal disease transmitted to humans from cattle, causing abscesses in the mouth and lungs (**pulmonary actinomycosis**) or in the ileum (**intestinal actinomycosis**)

**action potential** /'æksjən pə'tenʃəl/ *noun* a temporary change in electrical potential which occurs between the inside and the outside of a nerve or muscle fibre when a nerve impulse is sent

**active immunity** /,æktɪv ɪ'mju:nɪti/ *noun* immunity which is acquired by catching and surviving an infectious disease or by vaccination with a weakened form of the disease, which makes the body form antibodies

**activities of daily living** /æktɪvɪtiz əv ɪ'derli 'lɪvɪŋ/ *noun* a scale used by geriatricians and occupational therapists to assess the capacity of elderly or disabled people to live independently. Abbreviation **ADLs**

**activity** /æktɪvɪti/ *noun* **1.** what someone does ○ *difficulty with activities such as walking and dressing* **2.** the characteristic behaviour of a chemical ○ *The drug's activity only lasts a few hours.* □ **antibacterial activity** effective action against bacteria

**acuity** /ə'kju:ɪti/ *noun* keenness of sight, hearing or intellect

**acupressure** /'ækjʊpɾeʃəl/ *noun* a treatment which is based on the same principle as acupuncture in which, instead of needles, fingers are used on specific points on the body, called pressure points

**acupuncture** /'ækjʊpʌŋktʃəl/ *noun* a treatment based on needles being inserted through the skin into nerve centres in order to relieve pain or treat a disorder

**acute** /ə'kju:t/ *adjective* referring to a disease or condition which develops rapidly and can be dangerous ○ *an acute abscess* Opposite **chronic**

**acute abdomen** /ə,kju:t 'æbdəmən/ *noun* any serious condition of the abdomen which requires surgery

**acute bed** /ə'kju:t bed/ *noun* a hospital bed reserved for people requiring immediate treatment

**acute care** /ə'kju:t keə/ *noun* medical or surgical treatment in a hospital, usually for a short period, for a patient with a sudden severe illness or injury

**acute disseminated encephalomyelitis** /ə ,kju:t di,semineɪtɪd en,kefələʊməra'laɪtɪs/ *noun* an encephalomyelitis or myelitis believed to result from an autoimmune attack on the myelin of the central nervous system

**acute glaucoma** /ə,kju:t glɔ:'kəʊmə/ *noun* same as **angle-closure glaucoma**

**acute hospital** /ə'kju:t ,hɒspɪt(ə)l/ *noun* a hospital where people go for major surgery or intensive care of medical or surgical conditions

**acutely** /ə'kju:tli/ *adverb* **1.** having or causing a suddenly developing medical condition ○ *acutely ill patients* ○ *acutely toxic chemicals* **2.** extremely (*informal*)

**acute respiratory distress syndrome** /ə ,kju:t rɪ,spɪrət(ə)ri drɪ'stɪs ,sɪndrəʊm/ *noun* an infection of the lungs, often following injury, which prevents them functioning properly. Abbreviation **ARDS**

**acute rheumatism** /ə,kju:t 'ru:mətɪz(ə)m/ *noun* same as **rheumatic fever**

**acute rhinitis** /ə,kju:t rai'nartɪs/ *noun* a virus infection which causes inflammation of the mucous membrane in the nose and throat

**acute suppurative arthritis** /ə,kju:t ,sʌpʃʊrətɪv ɑ:θ'rartɪs/ *noun* same as **pyarthrosis**

**acute toxicity** /ə,kju:t tɒk'sɪsɪti/ *noun* a level of concentration of a toxic substance which makes people seriously ill or can cause death

**acyclovir** /eɪ'saɪkləʊvɪə/ *noun* same as **aciclovir**

**acystia** /eɪ'sɪstɪə/ *noun* a condition in which a baby is born without a bladder

**Adam's apple** /,ædəmz 'æp(ə)l/ *noun* a part of the thyroid cartilage which projects from the neck below the chin in a man. Also called **laryngeal prominence**

**adapt** /ə'dæpt/ *verb* **1.** to change one's ideas or behaviour to fit into a new situation ○ *She has adapted very well to her new job in the children's hospital.* **2.** to change something to make it more useful ○ *The brace has to be adapted to fit the patient.*

**adaptation** /,ædəp'teɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* **1.** a change which has been or can be made to something **2.** the act of changing something so that it fits a new situation

**ADD** *abbreviation* attention deficit disorder

**Addison's anaemia** /,ædɪs(ə)nz ə'ni:miə/ same as **pernicious anaemia** [Described 1849. After Thomas Addison (1793–1860), from Northumberland, founder of the science of endocrinology.]

**Addison's disease** /'ædɪs(ə)nz dɪ,zi:z/ *noun* a disease of the adrenal glands, causing a change in skin colour to yellow and then to dark brown and resulting in general weakness, anaemia, low blood pressure and wasting away. Treatment is with corticosteroid injections. [Described 1849. After Thomas Addison (1793–1860), from Northumberland, founder of the science of endocrinology.]

**adducent** /ə'dju:s(ə)nt/ *adjective* referring to a muscle which brings parts of the body together or moves them towards the central line of the body or a limb. Compare **abducent**

**adduct** /ə'dʌkt/ *verb* (of a muscle) to pull a leg or arm towards the central line of the body, or to pull a toe or finger towards the central line of a leg or arm. Opposite **abduct**

**adducted** /ə'dʌktɪd/ *adjective* referring to a body part brought towards the middle of the body

**adduction** /ə'dʌktʃən/ *noun* the movement of a part of the body towards the midline or towards a neighbouring part. Compare **abduction**. See illustration at **ANATOMICAL TERMS** in Supplement

**adductor** /ə'dʌktə/, **adductor muscle** /ə 'dʌktə ,mʌs(ə)l/ *noun* a muscle which pulls a part of the body towards the central line of the body. Opposite **abductor**

**aden-** /ædɪn/ *prefix* same as **adeno-** (*used before vowels*)

**adenectomy** /,ædɪ'nektəmi/ *noun* the surgical removal of a gland

**adenine** /'ædəni:n/ *noun* one of the four basic chemicals in DNA

**adenitis** /,ædɪ'nartɪs/ *noun* inflammation of a gland or lymph node. ⇨ **lymphadenitis**

**adeno-** /ædɪnəʊ/ *prefix* referring to glands

**adenocarcinoma** /,ædɪnəʊkɑ:sɪ'nəʊmə/ *noun* a malignant tumour of a gland

**adenohypophysis** /,ædɪnəʊhaɪ'pɒfɪsɪs/ *noun* the front lobe of the pituitary gland which secretes most of the pituitary hormones

**adenoid** /'ædɪnɔɪd/ *adjective* like a gland

**adenoidal** /,ædɪ'nɔɪd(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to the adenoids

**adenoidal tissue** /,ædɪnɔɪd(ə)l 'tɪʃu:z/ *noun* same as **adenoids**

**adenoidectomy** /,ædɪnɔɪ'dektəmi/ *noun* the surgical removal of the adenoids

**adenoids** /'ædɪnɔɪdz/ *plural noun* a mass of tissue at the back of the nose and throat that can restrict breathing if enlarged. Also called **pharyngeal tonsils**



**adenoid vegetation** /,ædɪnɔɪd ˌvedʒə'teɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a condition in children where the adenoidal tissue is covered with growths and can block the nasal passages or the Eustachian tubes

**adenolymphoma** /,ædɪnɔɪlɪm'fəʊmə/ *noun* a benign tumour of the salivary glands

**adenoma** /,ædɪ'nəʊmə/ *noun* a benign tumour of a gland

**adenomyoma** /,ædɪnəʊmaɪ'əʊmə/ *noun* a benign tumour made up of glands and muscle

**adenopathy** /,ædɪ'nɒpəθi/ *noun* a disease of a gland

**adenosclerosis** /,ædɪnəʊsklə'rəʊsɪs/ *noun* the hardening of a gland

**adenosine** /ə'denəʊsɪn/ *noun* a drug used to treat an irregular heartbeat

**adenosine diphosphate** /ə'denəʊsɪn daɪ'fɒsfeɪt/ *noun* a chemical compound which provides energy for processes to take place within living cells, formed when adenosine triphosphate reacts with water. Abbreviation **ADP**

**adenosine triphosphate** /ə'denəʊsɪn traɪ'fɒsfeɪt/ *noun* a chemical which occurs in all cells, but mainly in muscle, where it forms the energy reserve. Abbreviation **ATP**

**adenosis** /,ædɪ'nəʊsɪs/ *noun* any disease or disorder of the glands

**adenovirus** /'ædɪnəʊvaɪrəs/ *noun* a virus which produces upper respiratory infections and sore throats and can cause fatal pneumonia in infants

**ADH** *abbreviation* antidiuretic hormone

**ADHD** *abbreviation* attention deficit hyperactivity disorder

**adhesion** /əd'hɪʒ(ə)n/ *noun* a stable connection between two parts in the body, either in a healing process or between parts which are not usually connected

**adhesive dressing** /əd'hɪzɪv 'dresɪŋ/ *noun* a dressing with a sticky substance on the back so that it can stick to the skin

**adipose** /'ædɪpəs/ *adjective* containing fat, or made of fat

**adipose degeneration** /,ædɪpəs dɪ,dʒenə'reɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* an accumulation of fat in the cells of an organ such as the heart or liver, which makes the organ less able to perform its proper function. Also called **fatty degeneration**

**adiposis** /,ædɪ'pəʊsɪs/ *noun* a state where too much fat is accumulated in the body

**adiposis dolorosa** /ædɪ'pəʊsɪs ˌdɒlə'rəʊsə/ *noun* a disease of middle-aged women in which painful lumps of fatty substance form in the body. Also called **Dercum's disease**

**adiposogenitalis** /ædɪ'pəʊsəʊdʒenɪ'teɪlɪs/ *noun* same as **Fröhlich's syndrome**

**adiposuria** /ædɪ'pəʊ'sju:riə/ *noun* the presence of fat in the urine

**adiposus** /,ædɪ'pəʊsəs/ ♦ **panniculus adiposus**

**aditus** /'ædɪtəs/ *noun* an opening or entrance to a passage

**adjustment** /ə'dʒʌstmənt/ *noun* a specific directional high-speed movement of a joint performed by a chiropractor

**adjuvant** /'ædʒʊvənt/ *adjective* referring to treatment by drugs or radiation therapy after surgery for cancer ■ *noun* a substance added to a drug to enhance the effect of the main ingredient

**adjuvant therapy** /'ædʒʊvənt ˌθerəpi/ *noun* therapy using drugs or radiation after cancer surgery

**ADLs** *abbreviation* activities of daily living

**administer** /əd'mɪnɪstə/ *verb* to give someone medicine or a treatment □ **to administer orally** to give a medicine by mouth

**admission** /əd'mɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the act of being registered as a hospital patient

**adnexa** /æd'neksə/ *plural noun* structures attached to an organ

**adolescence** /,ædɔ'les(ə)ns/ *noun* the period of life when a child is developing into an adult

**adolescent** /,ædɔ'les(ə)nt/ *noun* a person who is at the stage of life when he or she is developing into an adult ■ *adjective* developing into an adult, or occurring at that stage of life ○ *adolescent boys and girls* ○ *adolescent fantasies*

**adoptive immunotherapy** /ə,dɒptɪv ɪmʒʊnə'θerəpi/ *noun* a treatment for cancer in which the patient's own white blood cells are used to attack cancer cells

**ADP** *abbreviation* adenosine diphosphate

**adrenal** /ə'dri:n(ə)l/ *adjective* situated near the kidney ■ *noun* same as **adrenal gland**

**adrenalectomy** /ə,dri:nə'lektəmi/ *noun* the surgical removal of one of the adrenal glands

**adrenal gland** /ə'dri:n(ə)l glænd/ *noun* one of two endocrine glands at the top of the kidneys which secrete cortisone, adrenaline and other hormones. Also called **adrenal body**, **adrenal**. See illustration at **KIDNEY** in Supplement

**adrenaline** /ə'drenəlɪn/ *noun* a hormone secreted by the medulla of the adrenal glands which has an effect similar to stimulation of the sympathetic nervous system

**adrenal medulla** /ə,dri:n(ə)l me'dʌlə/ *noun* the inner part of the adrenal gland which secretes adrenaline and noradrenaline. Also called **suprarenal medulla**

**adrenergic** /,ædrə'nɜ:dʒɪk/ *adjective* referring to a neurone or receptor which is stimulated by adrenaline. ☞ **beta blocker**

**adrenergic receptor** /,ædrənɜ:dʒɪk rɪ'septə/ *noun* same as **adrenoceptor**

COMMENT: Three types of adrenergic receptor act in different ways when stimulated by

adrenaline. Alpha receptors constrict the bronchi, beta 1 receptors speed up the heartbeat and beta 2 receptors dilate the bronchi.

**adrenoceptor** /ə,drenəʊ'septəl/ *noun* a cell or neurone which is stimulated by adrenaline. Also called **adrenoreceptor**, **adrenergic receptor**

**adrenocortical** /ə,dri:nəʊ'kɔ:tɪk(ə)l/ *adjective* relating to the cortex of the adrenal glands

**adrenocorticotrophic hormone** /ə,dri:nəʊ'kɔ:təkəʊtrɒfɪk 'hɔ:məʊn/ *noun* a hormone secreted by the pituitary gland, which makes the cortex of the adrenal glands produce corticosteroids. Abbreviation **ACTH**. Also called **corticotrophin**

**adrenocorticotrophin** /ə,dri:nəʊkɔ:təkəʊ'trəʊfɪn/ *noun* adrenaline extracted from animals' adrenal glands and used to prevent haemorrhages or to help asthmatic conditions

**adrenogenital syndrome** /ə,dri:nəʊ'dʒenɪt(ə)l,sɪndrəʊm/ *noun* a condition caused by overproduction of male sex hormones, where boys show rapid sexual development and females develop male characteristics

**adrenolytic** /ədri:nəʊ'lɪtɪk/ *adjective* acting against the secretion of adrenaline

**adrenoreceptor** /ə,drenəʊrɪ'septəl/ *noun* same as **adrenoceptor**

**adsorbent** /æd'sɔ:bənt/ *adjective* being capable of adsorption

**adsorption** /æd'sɔ:pʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the attachment of one substance to another, often the bonding of a liquid with a gas or vapour which touches its surface

**adult** /'ædʌlt/ *adjective* grown-up ○ *Adolescents reach the adult stage about the age of eighteen or twenty.* ■ *noun* someone who is no longer a child

**adult coeliac disease** /,ædʌlt 'si:liæk dɪ'zi:z/ *noun* a condition in adults where the villi in the intestine become smaller and so reduce the surface which can absorb nutrients

**adult dentition** /,ædʌlt den'tɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the 32 teeth which an adult has

**adulteration** /ə,dʌltə'reɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the act of making something less pure by adding another substance

**adult respiratory distress syndrome** /,ædʌlt rɪ'sprɪt(ə)rɪ dɪ'stres,sɪndrəʊm/ *noun* a description of various lung infections which reduce the lungs' efficiency. Abbreviation **ARDS**

**advanced trauma life support** /əd,vɑ:nst'traʊmə 'laɪf sə,pɔ:t/ *noun* the management of a trauma patient during the critical first hour after injury. Abbreviation **ATLS**

**adventitious** /,ædvən'tɪʃəs/ *adjective* on the outside or in an unusual place

**adventitious bursa** /,ædvəntɪʃəs 'bɜ:zə/ *noun* a bursa which develops as a result of continued pressure or rubbing

**adverse** /'ædvɜ:s/ *adjective* harmful or unfavourable

**adverse occurrence** /,ædvɜ:s ə'kʌrəns/ *noun* a harmful event which occurs during treatment

**advocacy** /'ædvəkəsi/ *noun* active support for something, especially in order to help people who would have difficulty in gaining attention without your help

**adynamic ileus** /eɪ,dəɪnæmɪk 'ɪliəs/ *noun* same as **paralytic ileus**

**aegophony** /i:'gɒfəni/ *noun* a high sound of the voice heard through a stethoscope, where there is fluid in the pleural cavity

**aer-** /eə/ *prefix* same as **aero-** (used before vowels)

**aeration** /eə'reɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the adding of air or oxygen to a liquid

**aero-** /eərəʊ/ *prefix* referring to air

**aeroba** /eə'rəʊbə/, **aerobe** /'eərəʊb/ *noun* a tiny organism which needs oxygen to survive

**aerobic** /eə'rəʊbɪk/ *adjective* needing oxygen to live, or taking place in the presence of oxygen

**aerogenous** /eə'rɒdʒənəs/ *adjective* referring to a bacterium which produces gas

**aerophagia** /,eərə'feɪdʒə/, **aerophagy** /eə'rɒfədʒi/ *noun* the habit of swallowing air when suffering from indigestion, so making the stomach pains worse

**aerosol** /'eərəsɒl/ *noun* tiny particles of a liquid such as a drug or disinfectant suspended in a gas under pressure in a container and used as a spray

**aetiology** /,i:tɪ'blɒdʒɪ/ *noun* **1.** the cause or origin of a disease **2.** the study of the causes and origins of diseases

**AiC** *abbreviation* Agenda for Change

**afebrile** /eɪ'fi:brɪl/ *adjective* with no fever

**affect** /ə'fekt/ *verb* to make something or someone change, especially to have a bad effect on something or someone ○ *Some organs are rapidly affected if the patient lacks oxygen for even a short time.* ■ *noun* same as **affection**

**affection** /ə'fekʃ(ə)n/, **affect** /ə'fekt/ *noun* the general state of a person's emotions

**affective** /ə'fektɪv/ *adjective* relating to a person's moods or feelings

**affective disorder** /ə'fektɪv dɪs'ɔ:də/ *noun* a condition which changes someone's mood, making him or her depressed or excited

**afferent** /'æf(ə)rənt/ *adjective* conducting liquid or electrical impulses towards the inside. Opposite **efferent**

**afferent nerve** /'æf(ə)rənt 'nɜ:v/ *noun* same as **sensory nerve**

**afferent vessel** /'æf(ə)rənt 'ves(ə)l/ *noun* a tube which brings lymph to a gland

**affinity** /ə'fɪnɪtɪ/ *noun* an attraction between two substances

**aflatoxin** /,æflə'tɒksɪn/ *noun* a poison produced by some moulds in some crops such as peanuts

**African trypanosomiasis** /,æfrɪkən 'trɪpənəsəʊ'maɪəsis/ *noun* same as **sleeping sickness**

**afterbirth** /'ɑ:ftəbɜ:θ/ *noun* the tissues, including the placenta and umbilical cord, which are present in the uterus during pregnancy and are expelled after the birth of a baby

**aftercare** /'ɑ:ftəkeə/ *noun* **1.** the care of a person who has had an operation. Aftercare treatment involves changing dressings and helping people to look after themselves again. **2.** the care of a mother who has just given birth

**after-effect** /'ɑ:ftər ɪ'fekt/ *noun* a change which appears only some time after the cause ○ *The operation had some unpleasant after-effects.*

**after-image** /'ɑ:ftər ɪ'mɪdʒ/ *noun* an image of an object which remains in a person's sight after the object itself has gone

**afterpains** /'ɑ:ftəpeɪnz/ *plural noun* regular pains in the uterus which are sometimes experienced after childbirth

**afunctional** /eɪ 'fʌŋkʃən(ə)l/ *adjective* which does not function properly

**agalactia** /,eɪgə'læktɪə/ *noun* a condition in which a mother is unable to produce milk after childbirth

**agammaglobulinaemia** /eɪ,gæməglɒbjʊlɪ 'ni:mɪə/ *noun* a deficiency or absence of immunoglobulins in the blood, which results in a reduced ability to provide immune responses

**agar** /'eɪgɑ:/, **agar agar** /,eɪgə 'eɪgə/ *noun* a culture medium based on an extract of seaweed used for growing microorganisms in laboratories

**age** /eɪdʒ/ *noun* the number of years which a person has lived ○ *What's your age on your next birthday?* ○ *He was sixty years of age.* ○ *The size varies according to age.* ■ *verb* to grow old

**age group** /'eɪdʒ grʊ:p/ *noun* all the people of a particular age or within a particular set of ages ○ *the age group 20–25*

**agency** /'eɪdʒənsɪ/ *noun* **1.** an organisation which carries out work on behalf of another organisation, e.g. one which recruits and employs nurses and supplies them to hospitals temporarily when full-time nursing staff are unavailable **2.** the act of causing something to happen ○ *The disease develops through the agency of bacteria present in the bloodstream.*

**Agenda for Change** /ə,dʒendə fə 'tʃeɪndʒ/ *noun* a pay and reform package designed to ensure that all directly employed NHS staff are paid on the basis of equal pay for work of equal

value, implemented in December 2004. Abbreviation **AfC**

**agenesis** /eɪ'dʒenəsɪs/ *noun* the absence of an organ, resulting from a failure in embryonic development

**agent** /'eɪdʒənt/ *noun* **1.** a chemical substance which makes another substance react **2.** a substance or organism which causes a disease or condition **3.** a person who acts as a representative of another person or carries out some kinds of work on his or her behalf

**agglutination** /ə,glu:tɪ'neɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the act of coming together or sticking to one another to form a clump, as of bacteria cells in the presence of serum, or blood cells when blood of different types is mixed

**agglutinin** /ə'glu:tɪnɪn/ *noun* a factor in a serum which makes cells stick together in clumps

**agglutininogen** /,æglu:'tɪnədʒən/ *noun* a factor in red blood cells which reacts with a specific agglutinin in serum

**agitation** /,ædʒɪ'teɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a state of being very nervous and anxious

**aglossia** /eɪ'glɒsɪə/ *noun* the condition of not having a tongue from birth

**agnosia** /æɡ'nəʊzɪə/ *noun* a brain disorder in which a person fails to recognise places, people, tastes or smells which they used to know well

**agonist** /'æɡənɪst/ *noun* **1.** a muscle which causes part of the body to move and another muscle to relax when it contracts. Also called **prime mover** **2.** a substance which produces an observable physiological effect by acting through specific receptors. † **antagonist**

**agony** /'æɡəni/ *noun* a very severe physical or emotional pain ○ *He lay in agony on the floor.* ○ *She suffered the agony of waiting for weeks until her condition was diagnosed.*

**agoraphobia** /,æɡ(ə)rə'fəʊbiə/ *noun* a fear of being in open spaces. Compare **claustrophobia**

**agoraphobic** /,æɡ(ə)rə'fəʊbɪk/ *adjective* afraid of being in open spaces. Compare **claustrophobic**

**agranulocytosis** /ə,grænjʊləʊsə'təʊsɪs/ *noun* a usually fatal disease where the number of granulocytes, a type of white blood cell, falls sharply because of a bone marrow condition

**agraphia** /eɪ'græfɪə/ *noun* the condition of being unable to put ideas into writing

**AHF** *abbreviation* antithaemophilic factor

**aid** /eɪd/ *noun* **1.** help **2.** a machine, tool or drug which helps someone do something ○ *He uses a walking frame as an aid to exercising his legs.* ■ *verb* to help someone or something ○ *The procedure is designed to aid the repair of tissues after surgery.*

**AID** /,eɪ ət 'di:/ *noun* full form **artificial insemination by donor**. Now called **DI**

**AIDS** /eɪdz/, **Aids** *noun* a viral infection which breaks down the body's immune system. Full form **acquired immunodeficiency syndrome**, **acquired immune deficiency syndrome**

**AIDS dementia** /,eɪdz dɪ'menʃə/ *noun* a form of mental degeneration resulting from infection with HIV

**AIDS-related complex** /,eɪdz rɪ,lertɪd 'kɒmpleks/, **AIDS-related condition** /,eɪdz rɪ,lertɪd kən'dɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* early symptoms shown by someone infected with the HIV virus, e.g. weight loss, fever and herpes zoster. Abbreviation **ARC**

**AIH** *abbreviation* artificial insemination by husband

**ailment** /'eɪlmənt/ *noun* an illness, though not generally a very serious one ○ *Chickenpox is one of the common childhood ailments.*

**air bed** /'eə bed/ *noun* a mattress which is filled with air, used to prevent the formation of bedsores. ▽ **conduction**

**airborne infection** /,eəbɔ:n ɪn'fekʃən/ *noun* an infection which is carried in the air

**air conduction** /'eə kən,dʌkʃən/ *noun* the process by which sounds pass from the outside to the inner ear through the auditory meatus

**air embolism** /'eə ,embəlɪz(ə)m/ *noun* a blockage caused by bubbles of air, that stops the flow of blood in vessels

**air passage** /'eə ,pæsɪdʒ/ *noun* any tube which takes air to the lungs, e.g. the nostrils, pharynx, larynx, trachea and bronchi

**airsickness** /'eəsɪknəs/ *noun* a queasy feeling, usually leading to vomiting, caused by the movement of an aircraft

**airway** /'eəweɪ/ *noun* a passage through which air passes, especially the trachea

**akathisia** /,eɪkə'thɪsiə/ *noun* restlessness

**akinesia** /,eɪkɪ'ni:ziə/ *noun* a lack of voluntary movement, as in Parkinson's disease

**akinetic** /,eɪkɪ'netɪk/ *adjective* without movement

**alacrima** /eɪ'lækrɪmə/ *noun* same as **xerosis**

**alactasia** /,eɪlækt'eɪziə/ *noun* a condition in which there is a deficiency of lactase in the intestine, making the patient incapable of digesting lactose, the sugar in milk

**alalia** /eɪ'leɪliə/ *noun* a condition in which a person completely loses the ability to speak

**alanine** /'æləni:n/ *noun* an amino acid

**alanine aminotransferase** /,æləni:n ə ,mi:nəʊ'trænsfəreɪz/ *noun* an enzyme which is found in the liver and can be monitored as an indicator of liver damage. Abbreviation **ALT**

**alar cartilage** /,eɪlə 'kɑ:tɪlɪdʒ/ *noun* cartilage in the nose

**Albee's operation** /'ɔ:lbi:z ɒpə'reɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a surgical operation to fuse two or more ver-

tebrae [After Frederick Houdlett Albee (1876–1945), US surgeon.]

**albinism** /'ælbɪnɪz(ə)m/ *noun* a condition in which a person lacks the pigment melanin and so has pink skin and eyes and white hair. It is hereditary and cannot be treated. ▽ **vitiligo**

**albino** /æ'lbi:nəʊ/ *noun* a person who is deficient in melanin and has little or no pigmentation in the skin, hair or eyes

**albuginea oculi** /,ælbjʊdʒɪniə 'ɒkjʊləɪ/ *noun* same as **sclera**

**albumin** /'ælbjʊmɪn/ *noun* a common protein, which is soluble in water, found in plant and animal tissue and digested in the intestine

**albuminuria** /,ælbjʊmɪ'njʊəriə/ *noun* a condition in which albumin is found in the urine, usually a sign of kidney disease, but also sometimes of heart failure

**albumose** /'ælbjʊməʊz/ *noun* an intermediate product in the digestion of protein

**alcohol** /'ælkəhɒl/ *noun* a pure colourless liquid which is formed by the action of yeast on sugar solutions and forms part of drinks such as wine and whisky

**alcohol abuse** /'ælkəhɒl ə,bju:z/ *noun* the excessive use of alcohol adversely affecting a person's health

**alcohol addiction** /'ælkəhɒl ə,dɪkʃən/ *noun* a condition in which a person is dependent on the use of alcohol

**alcohol-fast** /'ælkəhɒl fɑ:st/ *adjective* referring to an organ stained for testing which is not discoloured by alcohol

**alcoholic** /,ælkə'hɒlɪk/ *adjective* containing alcohol ■ *noun* a person who is addicted to drinking alcohol and shows changes in behaviour and personality

**alcoholic cirrhosis** /,ælkəhɒlɪk sɪ'rəʊsɪz/ *noun* cirrhosis of the liver caused by alcoholism

**Alcoholics Anonymous** /,ælkəhɒlɪks ə 'nɒnɪməs/ *noun* an organisation of former alcoholics which helps people to overcome their dependence on alcohol by encouraging them to talk about their problems in group therapy. Abbreviation **AA**

**alcoholism** /'ælkəhɒlɪz(ə)m/ *noun* excessive drinking of alcohol which becomes addictive

**alcohol poisoning** /'ælkəhɒl ,pɔɪz(ə)nɪŋ/ *noun* poisoning and disease caused by excessive drinking of alcohol

**alcoholuria** /,ælkəhɒ'ljʊəriə/ *noun* a condition in which alcohol is present in the urine (NOTE: The level of alcohol in the urine is used as a test for drivers who are suspected of driving while drunk.)

**aldosterone** /æ'lɒnstəʊən/ *noun* a hormone secreted by the cortex of the adrenal gland, which regulates the balance of sodium and potassium in the body and the amount of body fluid

**aldosteronism** /æl'dɒst(ə)rənɪz(ə)m/ *noun* a condition in which a person produces too much aldosterone, so that there is too much salt in the blood. This causes high blood pressure and the need to drink a lot of liquids.

**aleukaemic** /,ɛɪlu:'ki:mɪk/ *adjective* referring to a state where leukaemia is not present

**Alexander technique** /,æɪŋg'zɑ:ndə tek ,nɪ:k/ *noun* a method of improving the way a person stands and moves, by making them much more aware of how muscles behave

**alexia** /ɛɪ'leksɪə/ *noun* a condition in which the patient cannot understand printed words. Also called **word blindness**

**alfacalcidol** /,æɪfə'kælsɪdɒl/ *noun* a substance related to vitamin D, used by the body to maintain the right levels of calcium and phosphate, and also as a drug to help people who do not have enough vitamin D

**algesimeter** /,æɪdʒɪ'sɪmɪtə/ *noun* an instrument to measure the sensitivity of the skin to pain

**-algia** /æɪdʒɪə/ *suffix* a word ending that indicates a painful condition

**algid** /'æɪdʒɪd/ *adjective* referring to a stage in a disease that causes fever during which the body becomes cold

**alienation** /,ɛɪlɪə'neɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a psychological condition in which a person develops the feeling of not being part of the everyday world, and as a result often becomes hostile to other people

**alignment** /ə'lɑɪnmənt/ *noun* the arrangement of something in a straight line, or in the correct position in relation to something else

**alimentary** /,æɪlɪ'ment(ə)rɪ/ *adjective* providing food, or relating to food or nutrition

**alimentary canal** /æɪlɪ,ment(ə)rɪ kə'næl/ *noun* a tube in the body going from the mouth to the anus and including the throat, stomach and intestine, through which food passes and is digested

COMMENT: The alimentary canal is formed of the mouth, throat, oesophagus stomach and small and large intestines. Food is broken down by digestive juices in the mouth, stomach and small intestine, water is removed in the large intestine, and the remaining matter is passed out of the body as faeces.

**alimentation** /,æɪlɪmen'teɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the act of providing food or nourishment

**aliquot** /'æɪlɪkwɒt/ *noun* a part of a larger thing, especially a sample of something which is taken to be examined

**alkalaemia** /,æɪlkə'li:mɪə/ *noun* an excess of alkali in the blood

**alkali** /'æɪlkəlaɪ/ *noun* one of many substances which neutralise acids and form salts (NOTE: The plural is **alkalis**.)

**alkaline** /'æɪlkəlaɪn/ *adjective* containing more alkali than acid

**alkalinity** /,æɪlkə'lɪnɪti/ *noun* the level of alkali in a body ○ *Hyperventilation causes fluctuating carbon dioxide levels in the blood, resulting in an increase of blood alkalinity.*

**alkaloid** /'æɪlkələɪd/ *noun* one of many poisonous substances found in plants and used as medicines, e.g. atropine, morphine or quinine

**alkalosis** /,æɪlkə'ləʊsɪs/ *noun* a condition in which the alkali level in the body tissue is high, producing cramps

**alkaptonuria** /,æɪlkæptə'njuəriə/ *noun* a hereditary condition where dark pigment is present in the urine

**allantois** /ə'læntəʊsɪs/ *noun* one of the membranes in the embryo, shaped like a sac, which grows out of the embryonic hindgut

**allele** /ə'lɪ:l/ *noun* one of two or more alternative forms of a gene, situated in the same area on each of a pair of chromosomes and each producing a different effect

**allergen** /'ælədʒən/ *noun* a substance which produces hypersensitivity

**allergenic agent** /,ælədʒenɪk 'eɪdʒənt/ *noun* a substance which produces an allergy

**allergic** /ə'lɜ:dʒɪk/ *adjective* having an allergy to something ○ *She is allergic to cats.* ○ *I'm allergic to penicillin.*

**allergy** /'ælədʒɪ/ *noun* an unusual sensitivity to some substances such as pollen or dust, which cause a physical reaction such as sneezing or a rash in someone who comes into contact with them ○ *She has an allergy to household dust.* ○ *He has a penicillin allergy.* (NOTE: You **have an allergy** or you **are allergic** to something.)

**allergy bracelet** /'ælədʒɪ ,breɪslət/ *noun* ▶ **medical alert bracelet**

**allied health professional** /,æɪləd 'helθ prə ,feɪʃ(ə)n(ə)l/ *noun* a professional working in medicine who is not a doctor or nurse, e.g. a physiotherapist or paramedic

**allo-** /æləʊ/ *prefix* different

**allocation** /,æɪlə'keɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the way an amount of something is divided among the various departments of an organisation, or the amount which is received by a particular department

**allodynia** /,æɪlə'dɪniə/ *noun* pain of the skin caused by something such as clothing which usually does not cause pain

**allograft** /'æɪləʊgrɑ:ft/ *noun* same as **homograft**

**allopathy** /ə'lɒpəθi/ *noun* the treatment of a condition using drugs which produce opposite symptoms to those of the condition. Compare **homeopathy**

**allopurinol** /,æɪləʊ'pjuəriɒnɒl/ *noun* a drug which helps to stop the body producing uric acid, used in the treatment of gout

**all or none law** /ˌɔːl ɔː ˈnʌn lɔː/ *noun* the rule that the heart muscle either contracts fully or does not contract at all

**allylestrenol** /ˌælaɪˈestrənɒl/ *noun* a steroid used to encourage pregnancy

**alopecia** /ˌæləˈpiːʃə/ *noun* a condition in which hair is lost. Compare **hypotrichosis**

**alopecia areata** /ˌæləpiːʃə ˌæriˈeɪtə/ *noun* a condition in which the hair falls out in patches

**alpha** /ˈælfə/ *noun* the first letter of the Greek alphabet

**alpha-adrenoceptor antagonist** /ˌælfə ə ˈdriːnɔːriˈseptə ænˌtægənɪst/ , **alpha-adrenoceptor blocker** /ˌælfə ˌblɒkə/ *noun* a drug which can relax smooth muscle, used to treat urinary retention and hypertension. Also called **alpha blocker**

**alpha-fetoprotein** /ˌælfə ˌfiːtəʊˈprəʊtiːn/ *noun* a protein produced by the liver of the human fetus, which accumulates in the amniotic fluid. A high or low concentration is tested for by amniocentesis in the antenatal diagnosis of spina bifida or Down's syndrome, respectively.

**Alport's syndrome** /ˈɔːlpɔːts ˌsɪndrəm/ *noun* a genetic disease of the kidneys which sometimes causes a person to lose his or her hearing and sight

**alprostadil** /æɪˈprɒstədɪl/ *noun* a drug which makes blood vessels wider, used to treat impotence, prevent coagulation, and maintain babies with congenital heart conditions

**ALT** *abbreviation* alanine aminotransferase

**alternative medicine** /ɔːlˌtɜːnətɪv ˈmed(ə)ɪn/ *noun* the treatment of illness using therapies such as homeopathy or naturopathy which are not considered part of conventional Western medicine. † **complementary medicine**

**altitude sickness** /ˈæltɪtjuːd ˌsɪknəs/ *noun* a condition caused by reduced oxygen in the air above altitudes of 7000 to 8000 feet (3600 metres). Symptoms include headaches, breathlessness, fatigue, nausea and swelling of the face, hands and feet. Also called **high-altitude sickness**, **mountain sickness**

**aluminium hydroxide** /æləˌmɪniəm haɪ ˈdrɒksaɪd/ *noun* a chemical substance used as an antacid to treat indigestion. Formula: Al(OH)<sub>3</sub> or Al<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub>·3H<sub>2</sub>O.

**alveolar** /ˌælvɪˈəʊlə ˌæɪˈviːələ/ *adjective* referring to the alveoli

**alveolar duct** /ˌælvɪˈəʊlə dʌkt/ *noun* a duct in the lung which leads from the respiratory bronchioles to the alveoli. See illustration at **LUNGS** in Supplement

**alveolitis** /ˌælvɪəˈlaɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of an alveolus in the lungs or the socket of a tooth

**alveolus** /ˌælvɪˈəʊləs ˌæɪˈviːələs/ *noun* a small cavity, e.g. an air sac in the lungs or the socket

into which a tooth fits. See illustration at **LUNGS** in Supplement (NOTE: The plural is **alveoli**.)

**Alzheimer plaque** /ˈæltʃaɪmə plæk/ *noun* a disc-shaped plaque of amyloid found in the brain in people who have Alzheimer's disease

**Alzheimer's disease** /ˈæltʃaɪməz dɪˌziːz/ *noun* a disease where a person experiences progressive dementia due to nerve cell loss in specific brain areas, resulting in loss of mental faculties including memory [Described 1906. After Alois Alzheimer (1864–1915), Bavarian physician.]

**amalgam** /əˈmælgəm/ *noun* a mixture of metals, based on mercury and tin, used by dentists to fill holes in teeth

**amaurosis** /ˌæmɔːˈrɔʊsɪs/ *noun* blindness caused by disease of the optic nerve

**amaurotic familial idiocy** /ˌæmɔːrɔɪk fə ˌmɪliəl ˈɪdiəsi/, **amaurotic family idiocy** /ˌæmɔːrɔɪk ˌfæm(ə)li ˈɪdiəsi/ *noun* same as **Tay-Sachs disease**

**amb-** /æmb/ *prefix* same as **ambi-** (used before vowels)

**ambi-** /æmbɪ/ *prefix* both

**ambidextrous** /ˌæmbɪˈdekstrəs/ *adjective* referring to a person who can use both hands equally well and who is not right- or left-handed

**ambisexual** /ˌæmbɪˈseksʃuəl/ *adjective, noun* same as **bisexual**

**amblyopia** /ˌæmbliˈɔʊpiə/ *noun* a lack of normal vision without a structural cause. A common example is squint and other forms may be caused by the cyanide in tobacco smoke or by drinking methylated spirits.

**amblyopic** /ˌæmbliˈɔʊpɪk/ *adjective* affected by amblyopia

**amblyoscope** /ˌæmbliəʊskəʊp/ *noun* an instrument for measuring the angle of a squint and how effectively someone uses both their eyes together. Also called **orthoptoscope**

**ambulatory** /ˌæmbjuˈleɪ(ə)rɪ/ *adjective* referring to a patient who is not confined to bed but is able to walk

**ambulatory care** /ˌæmbjuˈleɪ(ə)rɪ ˈkeə/ *noun* treatment of a patient which does not involve staying in hospital during the night

**amelia** /əˈmiːliə/ *noun* the absence of a limb from birth, or a condition in which a limb is short from birth

**amelioration** /əˌmiːliəˈreɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the process of getting better

**ameloblastoma** /ˌæmɪləʊbləˈstəʊmə/ *noun* a tumour in the jaw, usually in the lower jaw

**amenorrhoea** /ˌeɪmənəˈriːə/ *noun* the absence of one or more menstrual periods, usual during pregnancy and after the menopause

**amentia** /eɪˈmenʃə/ *noun* the fact of being mentally underdeveloped

**ametropia** /,æmi'trəʊpiə/ *noun* a condition in which the eye cannot focus light correctly onto the retina, as in astigmatism, hypermetropia and myopia. Compare **emmetropia**

**amfetamine** /æm'fetəmi:n/ *noun* an addictive drug, similar to adrenaline, used to give a feeling of wellbeing and wakefulness. Also called **amphetamine**

**amikacin** /,æmi'keɪsɪn/ *noun* a type of antibiotic used to treat infections caused by aerobic bacteria

**amiloride** /ə'mɪləraɪd/ *noun* a drug which helps to increase the production of urine and preserve the body's supply of potassium

**amino acid** /ə,mi:nəʊ 'æsaɪd/ *noun* a chemical compound which is broken down from proteins in the digestive system and then used by the body to form its own protein

**aminobutyric acid** /ə,mi:nəʊbjʊtɪrɪk 'æsaɪd/ *noun* ▶ **gamma aminobutyric acid**

**aminoglycoside** /ə,mi:nəʊ'glɪkəsəɪd/ *noun* a drug used to treat many Gram-negative and some Gram-positive bacterial infections (NOTE: Aminoglycosides include drugs with names ending in **-cin**: gentamicin.)

**aminophylline** /,æmi'nɒfɪli:n/ *noun* a drug that makes the bronchial tubes wider, used in the treatment of asthma

**amiodarone** /,æmi'ɒdəʊən/ *noun* a drug that makes the blood vessels wider, used in the treatment of irregular heartbeat

**mitosis** /,æmi'təʊsɪs/ *noun* the multiplication of a cell by splitting of the nucleus

**amitriptyline** /,æmi'tɪrɪptɪli:n/ *noun* a sedative drug used to treat depression and persistent pain

**amlodipine** /æm'ləʊdɪpi:n/ *noun* a drug that helps to control the movement of calcium ions through cell membranes. It is used to treat hypertension and angina.

**ammonia** /ə'məʊniə/ *noun* a gas with a strong smell, a compound of nitrogen and hydrogen, which is a usual product of human metabolism

**amnesia** /æm'nɪziə/ *noun* loss of memory

**amnihook** /'æmnihʊk/ *noun* a hooked instrument used to induce labour by pulling on the amniotic sac

**amniocentesis** /,æmniəʊsen'ti:sɪs/ *noun* a procedure which involves taking a test sample of the amniotic fluid during pregnancy using a hollow needle and syringe

**amnion** /'æmniən/ *noun* the thin sac containing the amniotic fluid which covers an unborn baby in the uterus. Also called **amniotic sac**

**amnioscope** /'æmniəskəʊp/ *noun* an instrument used to examine a fetus through the cervical channel, before the amniotic sac is broken

**amniocopy** /,æmni'ɒskəpi/ *noun* an examination of the amniotic fluid during pregnancy

**amniotic** /,æmni'ɒtɪk/ *adjective* relating to the amnion

**amniotic fluid** /,æmniəʊtɪk 'flu:ɪd/ *noun* the fluid contained in the amnion which surrounds an unborn baby

**amniotomy** /,æmni'ɒtəmi/ *noun* a puncture of the amnion to help induce labour

**amoeba** /ə'mi:bə/ *noun* a form of animal life, made up of a single cell (NOTE: The plural is **amoebae**.)

**amoebiasis** /,æmi'biəʊsɪs/ *noun* an infection caused by amoebae which can result in amoebic dysentery in the large intestine (**intestinal amoebiasis**) and sometimes affects the lungs (**pulmonary amoebiasis**)

**amoebic** /ə'mi:bɪk/ *adjective* relating to or caused by amoebae

**amorphous** /ə'mɔ:fəs/ *adjective* with no regular shape

**amoxicillin** /ə'mɒksɪsɪlɪn/ *noun* an antibiotic

**Amoxil** /ə'mɒksɪl/ a trade name for amoxicillin

**amphetamine** /æm'fetəmi:n/ *noun* same as **amfetamine**

**amphiarthrosis** /,æmfɪə'θrəʊsɪs/ *noun* a joint which only has limited movement, e.g. one of the joints in the spine

**amphotericin** /,æmfəʊ'terɪsɪn/ *noun* an antifungal agent, used against *Candida*

**ampicillin** /,æmpɪ'sɪlɪn/ *noun* a type of penicillin, used as an antibiotic

**ampoule** /'æmpu:l/, **ampule** /'æmpju:l/ *noun* a small glass container, closed at the neck, used to contain sterile drugs for use in injections

**ampulla** /æm'pʊlə/ *noun* a swelling of a canal or duct, shaped like a bottle (NOTE: The plural is **ampullae**.)

**amputation** /,æmpju'teɪf(ə)n/ *noun* the surgical removal of a limb or part of a limb

**amputee** /,æmpju'ti:/ *noun* someone who has had a limb or part of a limb removed in a surgical operation

**amygdala** /ə'mɪgdələ/ *noun* an almond-shaped body in the brain, at the end of the caudate nucleus of the thalamus. Also called **amygdaloid body**

**amygdaloid body** /ə'mɪgdələɪd 'bɒdi/ *noun* same as **amygdala**

**amyl-** /æm(ə)l/ *prefix* referring to starch

**amylase** /'æmɪleɪz/ *noun* an enzyme which converts starch into maltose

**amyl nitrate** /,æm(ə)l 'naitreɪt/ *noun* a drug used to reduce blood pressure (NOTE: Amyl nitrate is also used as a recreational drug.)

**amyloid** /'æmɪləɪd/ *noun* a waxy protein that forms in some tissues during the development of various diseases, e.g. forming disc-shaped plaques in the brain in Alzheimer's disease

**amyloid disease** /'æmɪləɪd dɪˌzɪz/ *noun* same as **amyloidosis**

**amyloidosis** /,æmɪləɪ'dəʊsɪs/ *noun* a disease of the kidneys and liver, where amyloid develops in the tissues. Also called **amyloid disease**

**amylopsin** /,æmɪ'lɒpsɪn/ *noun* an enzyme which converts starch into maltose

**amylose** /'æmɪləʊz/ *noun* a carbohydrate of starch

**amyotonia** /,eɪmə'təʊniə/ *noun* a lack of muscle tone

**amyotonia congenita** /,eɪmə'təʊniə kɒn'dʒenɪtə/ *noun* a congenital disease of children in which the muscles lack tone. Also called **floppy baby syndrome**

**amyotrophy** /eɪ,mə'ɒ'trɒfiə/ *noun* a condition in which a muscle wastes away

**amyotrophic lateral sclerosis** /eɪ'mə'ɒ'trɒfɪk,lætər(ə)l sklə'rəʊsɪs/ *noun* a motor neurone disease in which the limbs twitch and the muscles gradually waste away. Also called **Gehrig's disease**. Abbreviation **ALS**

**amyotrophy** /eɪ,mə'ɒ'trɒfi/ same as **amyotrophy**

**an-** /æn/ *prefix* same as **ana-** (used before vowels)

**ana-** /ænə/ *prefix* without or lacking

**anabolic** /,ænə'bɒlɪk/ *adjective* referring to a substance which synthesises protein

**anabolic steroid** /ænə'bɒlɪk'stɪrɔɪd/ *noun* a drug which encourages the synthesis of new living tissue, especially muscle, from nutrients

**anabolism** /æ'næbəlɪz(ə)m/ *noun* the process of building up complex chemical substances on the basis of simpler ones

**anacrotism** /ə'næk'rɒtɪz(ə)m/ *noun* a second stroke in the pulse

**anaemia** /ə'niːmiə/ *noun* a condition in which the level of red blood cells is less than usual or where the haemoglobin is less, making it more difficult for the blood to carry oxygen. The symptoms are tiredness and pale colour, especially pale lips, nails and the inside of the eyelids. The condition can be fatal if not treated.

**anaemic** /ə'niːmɪk/ *adjective* having anaemia

**anaerobe** /'ænərəʊb, æn'ɛərəʊb/ *noun* a microorganism which lives without oxygen, e.g. the tetanus bacillus

**anaerobic** /,ænə'rəʊbɪk/ *adjective* **1.** not needing oxygen for metabolism ○ *anaerobic bacteria* **2.** without oxygen ○ *anaerobic conditions*

**anaesthesia** /,ænəs'θiːziə/ *noun* **1.** a state, deliberately produced in a patient by a medical procedure, in which he or she can feel no pain, either in a part or in the whole of the body **2.** a loss of feeling caused by damage to nerves (NOTE: The US spelling is **anesthesia**.)

**anaesthetic** /,ænəs'θetɪk/ *adjective* inducing loss of feeling ■ *noun* a substance given to someone to remove feeling, so that he or she can undergo an operation without pain

**anaesthetic induction** /,ænəsθetɪk ɪn'dʌkʃən/ *noun* a method of inducing anaesthesia in a patient

**anaesthetic risk** /,ænəsθetɪk 'rɪsk/ *noun* the risk that an anaesthetic may cause serious unwanted side effects

**anaesthetise** /ə'niːsθətaɪz/, **anaesthetize** *verb* to produce a loss of feeling in a person or in part of the person's body

**anaesthetist** /ə'niːsθətɪst/ *noun* a specialist who administers anaesthetics

**anal** /'eɪn(ə)l/ *adjective* relating to the anus

**analeptic** /,ænə'leptɪk/ *noun* a drug used to make someone regain consciousness or to stimulate a patient

**analgesia** /,æn(ə)'dʒiːziə/ *noun* a reduction of the feeling of pain without loss of consciousness

**analgesic** /,æn(ə)'dʒiːzɪk/ *adjective* relating to analgesia ■ *noun* a painkilling drug which produces analgesia and reduces pyrexia

**anally** /'eɪn(ə)li/ *adverb* through the anus ○ *The patient is not able to pass faeces anally.*

**analyse** /'ænəlaɪz/ *verb* to examine something in detail ○ *The laboratory is analysing the blood samples.* ○ *When the food was analysed it was found to contain traces of bacteria.*

**analysis** /ə'næləsɪs/ *noun* an examination of a substance to find out what it is made of (NOTE: The plural is **analyses**.)

**analyst** /'ænəlɪst/ *noun* a person who examines samples of substances or tissue, to find out what they are made of

**anaphase** /'ænəfeɪz/ *noun* a stage in cell division, after the metaphase and before the telophase

**anaphylactic** /,ænəfi'læktɪk/ *adjective* relating to or caused by extreme sensitivity to a substance

**anaphylactic shock** /,ænəfi'læktɪk 'ʃɒk/ *noun* a sudden severe reaction, which can be fatal, to something such as an injected substance or a bee sting

**anaphylaxis** /,ænəfi'læksɪs/ *noun* **1.** extreme sensitivity to a substance introduced into the body **2.** same as **anaphylactic shock**

**anaplasia** /,ænə'plɛɪsiə/ *noun* the loss of a cell's typical characteristics, caused by cancer

**anaplastic** /,ænə'plæstɪk/ *adjective* referring to anaplasia

**anarthria** /æ'n'ɑːθriə/ *noun* the loss of the ability to speak words properly

**anasarca** /,ænəs'ɑːkə/ *noun* the presence of fluid in the body tissues. ⇨ **oedema**

**anastomose** /ə'næstəməʊz/ *verb* to join two blood vessels or tubular structures together



**anastomosis** /ə,næstə'məʊsɪs/ *noun* a connection made between two blood vessels or tubular structures, either naturally or by surgery

**anatomical** /,ænə'tɒmɪk(ə)/ *adjective* relating to the anatomy ○ *the anatomical features of a fetus*

**anatomy** /ə'nætəmi/ *noun* **1.** the structure, especially the internal structure, of the body **2.** the branch of science that studies the structure of the bodies of humans, animals and plants ○ *They are studying anatomy.*

**ancillary worker** /æn'sɪləri ,wɜ:kə/ *noun* someone who does a job for patients such cooking or cleaning which is supplementary to medical care

**anconeus** /æŋ'kəʊniəs/ *noun* a small triangular muscle at the back of the elbow

**Ancylostoma** /,ænsɪlə'stəʊmə/ *noun* a parasitic worm in the intestine which holds onto the wall of the intestine with its teeth and lives on the blood and protein of the carrier

**ancylostomiasis** /,ænsɪləʊstə'maɪəʊsɪs/ *noun* a disease of which the symptoms are weakness and anaemia, caused by a hookworm which lives on the blood of the carrier. In severe cases the person may die.

**androgen** /'ændrədʒən/ *noun* a male sex hormone, testosterone or androsterone, which increases the male characteristics of the body

**androgenic** /,ændrə'dʒənɪk/ *adjective* producing male characteristics

**andrology** /æn'drɒlədʒi/ *noun* the study of male sexual characteristics and subjects such as impotence, infertility and the male menopause

**androsterone** /æn'drɒstərəʊn/ *noun* one of the male sex hormones

**anencephalous** /,ænen'kefələs/ *adjective* having no brain

**anencephaly** /,ænen'kefəli/ *noun* the absence of a brain, which causes a fetus to die a few hours after birth

**anergy** /'ænədʒi/ *noun* a state of severe weakness and lack of energy

**aneurine** /ə'njʊəri:n/ *noun* same as **Vitamin B<sub>1</sub>**

**aneurysm** /'ænjəri:z(ə)m/ *noun* a swelling caused by the weakening of the wall of a blood vessel

**angi-** /ændʒi/ *prefix* same as **angio-** (*used before vowels*)

**angiectasis** /,ændʒi'ektəʊsɪs/ *noun* a swelling of the blood vessels

**angiitis** /,ændʒi'artɪs/ *noun* an inflammation of a blood vessel

**angina** /æ'n'dʒaɪnə/ *noun* a pain in the chest following exercise or eating, which is caused by an inadequate supply of blood to the heart muscles because of narrowing of the arteries. It is com-

monly treated with nitrates or calcium channel blocker drugs.

**angina pectoris** /æŋ,dʒaɪnə 'pektərɪs/ *noun* same as **angina**

**angio-** /ændʒiəʊ/ *prefix* referring to a blood vessel

**angiocardiogram** /,ændʒiəʊ'ku:diəgræm/ *noun* a series of pictures resulting from angiocardiology

**angiocardigraphy** /,ændʒiəʊku:di'ɒgrəfi/ *noun* an X-ray examination of the cardiac system after injection with an opaque dye so that the organs show up clearly on the film

**angiodysplasia** /,ændʒiəʊdɪs'plɛrziə/ *noun* a condition where the blood vessels in the colon dilate, resulting in loss of blood

**angiogenesis** /,ændʒiəʊ'dʒɛnəʊsɪs/ *noun* the formation of new blood vessels, e.g. in an embryo or as a result of a tumour

**angiogram** /'ændʒiəʊgræm/ *noun* an X-ray picture of blood vessels

**angiography** /,ændʒi'ɒgrəfi/ *noun* an X-ray examination of blood vessels after injection with an opaque dye so that they show up clearly on the film

**angiology** /,ændʒi'blɒdʒi/ *noun* the branch of medicine which deals with blood vessels and the lymphatic system

**angioma** /,ændʒi'əʊmə/ *noun* a benign tumour formed of blood vessels, e.g. a naevus

**angioneurotic oedema** /,ændʒiəʊnɜ:ʃu,rɒtɪk i'di:zə/ *noun* a sudden accumulation of liquid under the skin, similar to nettle rash

**angiopathy** /,ændʒi'ɒpəθi/ *noun* a disease of vessels such as blood and lymphatic vessels

**angioplasty** /'ændʒiəʊ,plæsti/ *noun* plastic surgery to repair a blood vessel, e.g. a narrowed coronary artery

**angiosarcoma** /,ændʒiəʊsɑ:'kəʊmə/ *noun* a malignant tumour in a blood vessel

**angiospasm** /'ændʒiəʊspæz(ə)m/ *noun* a spasm which constricts blood vessels

**angiotensin** /'ændʒiəʊtensɪn/ *noun* a polypeptide which affects blood pressure by causing vasoconstriction and increasing extracellular volume

**angiotensin-converting enzyme inhibitor** /,ændʒiəʊtensɪn kən,vɜ:ɪtɪŋ 'enzaim ɪn ,hɪbɪtə/ *noun* a drug which inhibits the conversion of angiotensin I to angiotensin II, which constricts arteries, used in the treatment of hypertension and heart failure. Also called **ACE inhibitor** (NOTE: ACE inhibitors have names ending in **-pril: captopril.**)

**angle-closure glaucoma** /,æŋgəl ,kləʊzə glə:'kəʊmə/ *noun* an unusually high pressure of fluid inside the eyeball caused by pressure of the

iris against the lens, trapping the aqueous humour. Also called **acute glaucoma**

**angular vein** /ˈæŋɡjʊlə veɪn/ *noun* a vein which continues the facial vein at the side of the nose

**anhedonia** /ˌænhɪˈdəʊniə/ *noun* a psychological condition in which a person is unable to enjoy all the experiences that most people enjoy

**anhidrosis** /ˌænhɪˈdrəʊsɪs/ *noun* a condition in which sweating by the body is reduced or stops completely

**anhidrotic** /ˌænhɪˈdrɒtɪk/ *adjective* referring to a drug which reduces sweating

**anhyaemia** /ˌænhaiˈdriːmiə/ *noun* a lack of sufficient fluid in the blood

**anhydrous** /ænhˈhaɪdrəs/ *adjective* referring to compounds or crystals that contain no water

**anidrosis** /ˌæniˈdrəʊsɪs/ *noun* same as **anhidrosis**

**aniridia** /ˌæniˈrɪdiə/ *noun* a congenital absence of the iris

**anisocytosis** /ˌænaɪsəʊsarˈtəʊsɪs/ *noun* a variation in size of red blood cells

**anisomelia** /ˌænaɪsəʊˈmiːliə/ *noun* a difference in length of the legs

**anisometropia** /ˌænaɪsəʊməˈtrəʊpiə/ *noun* a state where the refraction in the two eyes is different

**ankle** /ˈæŋkəl/ *noun* the part of the body where the foot is connected to the leg

**ankyloblepharon** /ˌæŋkɪləʊˈblefərən/ *noun* a state where the edges of the eyelids are stuck together

**ankylosing spondylitis** /ˌæŋkɪləʊzɪŋ spɒndɪˈlaɪtɪs/ *noun* a condition occurring more frequently in young men, in which the vertebrae and sacroiliac joints are inflamed and become stiff

**ankylosis** /ˌæŋkɪˈləʊsɪs/ *noun* a condition in which the bones of a joint fuse together

**Ankylostoma** /ˌæŋkɪlˈstəʊmə/ *noun* same as **Ancylostoma**

**ankylostomiasis** /ˌæŋkɪləʊstəˈmaɪəsɪs/ *noun* same as **ancylostomiasis**

**annular** /ˈænjʊlə/ *adjective* shaped like a ring

**annulus** /ˈænjʊləs/ *noun* a structure shaped like a ring

**ano-** /ænoʊ/ *prefix* referring to the anus

**anodyne** /ˈænədəɪn/ *noun* a drug which reduces pain, e.g. aspirin or codeine ■ *adjective* referring to drugs that bring relief from pain or discomfort

**anomalous** /əˈnɒmələs/ *adjective* different from what is usual

**anomaly** /əˈnɒməli/ *noun* something which is different from the usual

**anomie** /ˈænəmi/ *noun* a psychological condition in which a person develops the feeling of not being part of the everyday world, and behaves as though they do not have any supporting social or moral framework

**anonychia** /ˌænoʊˈnɪkiə/ *noun* a congenital absence of one or more nails

**anopheles** /əˈnɒfəliːz/ *noun* a mosquito which carries the malaria parasite

**anoplasty** /ˈeɪnəʊplæsti/ *noun* surgery to repair the anus, as in treating haemorrhoids

**anorchism** /æˈnɔːkɪz(ə)m/ *noun* a congenital absence of testicles

**anorectal** /ˌeɪnəʊˈrekt(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to both the anus and rectum

**anorexia** /ˌænoʊˈreksiə/ *noun* loss of appetite

**anorexia nervosa** /ˌænoʊreksiə nɜːˈvʊsə/ *noun* a psychological condition, usually found in girls and young women, in which a person refuses to eat because of a fear of becoming fat

**anosmia** /æˈnɔːmiə/ *noun* the lack of the sense of smell

**anovular** /æˈnɒvjʊlə/ *adjective* without an ovum

**anovular bleeding** /æˈnɒvjʊlə ˈbliːdɪŋ/ *noun* bleeding from the uterus when ovulation has not taken place

**anovulation** /æˈnɒvjʊˈleɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a condition in which a woman does not ovulate and is therefore infertile

**anoxaemia** /ˌænoʊkˈsiːmiə/ *noun* a reduction of the amount of oxygen in the blood

**anoxia** /æˈnɒksɪə/ *noun* a lack of oxygen in body tissue

**anoxic** /æˈnɒksɪk/ *adjective* referring to anoxia or lacking oxygen

**antacid** /æntˈæsɪd/ *adjective* preventing too much acid forming in the stomach or altering the amount of acid in the stomach ■ *noun* a substance that stops too much acid forming in the stomach, used in the treatment of gastro-intestinal conditions such as ulcers, e.g. calcium carbonate or magnesium trisilicate

**antagonist** /æntˈæɡənɪst/ *adjective* **1.** referring to a muscle which opposes another muscle in a movement **2.** referring to a substance which opposes another substance ■ *noun* a substance which acts through specific receptors to block the action of another substance, but which has no observable physiological effect itself ○ *Atropine is a cholinergic antagonist and blocks the effects of acetylcholine.*

**ante-** /æntɪ/ *prefix* before

**ante cibum** /ˌæntɪ ˈtʃɪbəm, ˌæntɪ ˈsɪːbəm/ *adverb* full form of **a.c.**

**anteflexion** /ˌæntɪˈfleksjən/ *noun* the curving forward of an organ, e.g. the usual curvature of the uterus

**antemortem** /,ænti'mɔ:təm/ *noun* the period before death

**antenatal** /,ænti'neɪ(ə)l/ *adjective* during the period between conception and childbirth

**antenatal clinic** /,ænti'neɪ(ə)l ,klyɪnɪk/ *noun* a clinic where expectant mothers are taught how to look after babies, do exercises and have medical checkups. Also called **maternity clinic**

**antenatal diagnosis** /,ænti,neɪ(ə)l ,daɪəg'nəʊsɪs/ *noun* a medical examination of a pregnant woman to see if the fetus is developing in the usual way. Also called **prenatal diagnosis**

**antepartum** /,ænti'pɑ:təm/ *noun* the period of three months before childbirth ■ *adjective* referring to the three months before childbirth

**antepartum haemorrhage** /,ænti'pɑ:təm 'hemərɪdʒ/ *noun* bleeding from the vagina before labour. Abbreviation **APH**

**anterior** /æ'n'tɪəriə/ *adjective* in front. Opposite **posterior**

**anterior aspect** /æ'n,tɪəriə 'æspekt/ *noun* a view of the front of the body, or of the front of part of the body. See illustration at **ANATOMICAL TERMS** in Supplement

**anterior fontanelle** /æ'n,tɪəriə fɒntə'nel/ *noun* the cartilage at the top of the head where the frontal bone joins the two parietals

**anterior nares** /æ'n,tɪəriə 'neəri:z/ *plural noun* the two nostrils. Also called **external nares**

**anterograde amnesia** /,æntə'græʊreɪd æm'nɪ:ziə/ *noun* a brain condition in which the person cannot remember things which happened recently

**anteversion** /,ænti'vɜ:ʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the tilting forward of an organ, whether usual, as of the uterus, or unusual

**anthelmintic** /,ænthel'mɪntɪk/ *noun* a substance which removes worms from the intestine ■ *adjective* removing worms from the intestine

**anthracosis** /,ænthrə'kəʊsɪs/ *noun* a lung disease caused by breathing coal dust

**anthrax** /'ænthræks/ *noun* a disease of cattle and sheep which can be transmitted to humans

**anthrop-** /ænthrəp/ *prefix* referring to human beings

**anthropology** /,ænthrə'pɒlədʒi/ *noun* the study of human beings as a species, especially their culture or development. It differs from sociology in taking a more historical and comparative approach.

**anthropometry** /,ænthrə'pɒmətri/ *noun* the study of human body measurements (NOTE: The uses of anthropometry include the design of ergonomic furniture and the examination and comparison of populations.)

**anti-** /ænti/ *prefix* against

**antiarrhythmic** /,æntiə'rɪðmɪk/ *adjective* referring to a drug which corrects an irregular heartbeat

**antiasthmatic** /,æntiæs'mætɪk/ *adjective* referring to a drug that is used to treat asthma

**antibacterial** /,æntɪbæk'tɪəriəl/ *adjective* destroying bacteria

**antibiotic** /,æntɪbaɪ'ɒtɪk/ *adjective* stopping the spread of bacteria ■ *noun* a drug which is developed from living substances and which stops the spread of bacteria, e.g. penicillin ○ *He was given a course of antibiotics.* ○ *Antibiotics have no effect against viral diseases.*

**antibody** /'æntɪbɒdi/ *noun* a protein that is stimulated by the body to produce foreign substances such as bacteria, as part of an immune reaction ○ *Tests showed that he had antibodies in his blood.*

**antibody-negative** /,æntɪbɒdi 'negətɪv/ *adjective* showing none of a particular antibody in the blood ○ *The donor tested antibody-negative.*

**antibody-positive** /,æntɪbɒdi 'pɒzɪtɪv/ *adjective* showing the presence of particular antibodies in the blood ○ *The patient is HIV antibody-positive.*

**anticholinergic** /,æntɪkəʊlɪ'nɜ:dʒɪk/ *adjective* blocking nerve impulses which are part of the stress response ■ *noun* one of a group of drugs which are used to control stress

**anticholinesterase** /,æntɪkəʊlɪ'n'estəreɪz/ *noun* a substance which blocks nerve impulses by reducing the activity of the enzyme cholinesterase

**anticoagulant** /,æntɪkəʊ'ægjʊlənt/ *adjective* slowing or stopping the clotting of blood ■ *noun* a drug which slows down or stops the clotting of blood, used to prevent the formation of a thrombus (NOTE: Anticoagulants have names ending in **-parin**: heparin.)

**anticonvulsant** /,æntɪkən'vʌls(ə)nt/ *adjective* acting to control convulsions ■ *noun* a drug used to control convulsions, as in the treatment of epilepsy, e.g. carbamazepine

**anti-D** /,æntɪ 'di/, **anti-D gamma-globulin** /æntɪ ,di: ,gæmə 'glɒbjʊlɪn/ *noun* Rh D immunoglobulin, used to treat pregnant women who develop antibodies when the mother is Rh-negative and the fetus is Rh-positive

**antidepressant** /,æntɪdɪ'pres(ə)nt/ *adjective* acting to relieve depression ■ *noun* a drug used to relieve depression by stimulating the mood of a depressed person. Examples are tricyclic antidepressants, selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors and monoamine oxidase inhibitors.

**anti-D immunoglobulin** /æntɪ ,di: ɪmju'nəʊ 'glɒbjʊlɪn/ *noun* immunoglobulin administered to Rh-negative mothers after the birth of an Rh-positive baby, to prevent haemolytic disease of the newborn in the next pregnancy

**antidiuretic** /,æntidaɪjʊ'retɪk/ *noun* a substance which stops the production of excessive amounts of urine ○ *hormones which have an anti-diuretic effect on the kidneys* ■ *adjective* preventing the excessive production of urine

**antidote** /'æntɪdɔʊt/ *noun* a substance which counteracts the effect of a poison ○ *There is no satisfactory antidote to cyanide.*

**antiembolic** /,æntiɛm'bɒlɪk/ *adjective* preventing embolism

**antiemetic** /,ænti'i'metɪk/ *noun* a drug which prevents vomiting ■ *adjective* acting to prevent vomiting

**antiepileptic drug** /,æntiɛpɪ'leptɪk drʌɡ/ *noun* a drug used in the treatment of epilepsy and convulsions, e.g. carbamazepine

**antifibrinolytic** /,æntifaɪbrɪnɔ'li:tɪk/ *adjective* acting to reduce fibrosis

**antifungal** /,ænti'fʌŋɡəl/ *adjective* referring to a substance which kills or controls fungal and yeast infections, e.g. candida and ringworm (NOTE: Antifungal drugs have names ending in **-conazole: fluconazole.**)

**antigen** /'æntɪdʒən/ *noun* a substance that stimulates the body to produce antibodies, e.g. a protein on the surface of a cell or microorganism

**antigenic** /,æntɪ'dʒɛnɪk/ *adjective* referring to a substance which stimulates the formation of antibodies

**antihaemophilic factor** /,æntɪhi:mə'fɪlɪk ,fæktə/ *noun* factor VIII, used to encourage blood-clotting in haemophiliacs. Abbreviation **AHF**

**anthelmintic** /,æntihel'mɪnθɪk/ *noun* a drug used in the treatment of worm infections such as threadworm, hookworm or roundworm

**antihistamine** /,æntɪ'hɪstəmi:n/ *noun* a drug used to control the effects of an allergy which releases histamine, or reduces gastric acid in the stomach for the treatment of gastric ulcers (NOTE: Antihistamines have names ending in **-tidine: loratidine** for allergies, **cimetidine** for gastric ulcers.)

**antihypertensive** /,æntɪhaɪpə'tensɪv/ *adjective* acting to reduce blood pressure ■ *noun* a drug used to reduce high blood pressure

**anti-inflammatory** /,æntɪ ɪn'flæmət(ə)rɪ/ *adjective* referring to a drug which reduces inflammation

**antilymphocytic serum** /,æntɪlɪmfəʊ'sɪtɪk ,sɪərəm/ *noun* a serum used to produce immunosuppression in people undergoing transplant operations. Abbreviation **ALS**

**antimalarial** /,æntɪmə'lɛəriəl/ *noun* a drug used to treat malaria and in malarial prophylaxis ■ *adjective* treating or preventing malaria

**antimetabolite** /,æntɪmə'tæbəlaɪt/ *noun* a substance which can replace a cell metabolism, but which is not active

**antimicrobial** /,æntɪmɑ'krəʊbiəl/ *adjective* acting against microorganisms that cause disease

**antimigraine** /,æntɪ'maɪgrɛɪn/ *noun* a drug used in the treatment of migraine

**antimitotic** /,æntɪmɑ'tɒtɪk/ *adjective* preventing the division of a cell by mitosis

**antimuscarinic** /,æntɪmʌskə'rɪnɪk/ *adjective* referring to a drug which blocks acetylcholine receptors found on smooth muscle in the gut and eye

**antimycotic** /,æntɪmɑ'kɒtɪk/ *adjective* destroying fungi

**antinauseant** /,æntɪ'nəʊziənt/ *adjective* referring to a drug which helps to suppress nausea

**antioxidant** /,æntɪ'ɒksɪd(ə)nt/ *noun* a substance which makes oxygen less damaging, e.g. in the body or in foods or plastics ○ *antioxidant vitamins*

**antiperistalsis** /,æntɪpɛrɪ'stælsɪs/ *noun* a movement in the oesophagus or intestine which causes their contents to move in the opposite direction to usual peristalsis, so leading to vomiting

**antiperspirant** /,æntɪ'pɜ:sp(ə)rənt/ *noun* a substance which prevents sweating ■ *adjective* preventing sweating

**antipruritic** /,æntɪprʊ'rɪtɪk/ *noun* a substance which prevents itching ■ *adjective* preventing itching

**antipsychotic** /,æntɪsaɪ'kɒtɪk/ *noun* a neuroleptic or major tranquilliser drug which calms disturbed people without causing sedation or confusion by blocking dopamine receptors in the brain

**antipyretic** /,æntɪpa'retɪk/ *noun* a drug which helps to reduce a fever ■ *adjective* reducing fever

**anti-Rh body** /,æntɪ a:r 'eɪtʃ ,bɒdɪ/ *noun* an antibody formed in a mother's blood in reaction to a Rhesus antigen in the blood of the fetus

**antisepsis** /,æntɪ'sɛpsɪs/ *noun* a procedure intended to prevent sepsis

**antiseptic** /,æntɪ'sɛptɪk/ *adjective* preventing harmful microorganisms from spreading ○ *She gargled with an antiseptic mouthwash.* ■ *noun* a substance which prevents germs growing or spreading ○ *The nurse painted the wound with antiseptic.*

**antiserum** /,æntɪ'sɪərəm/ *noun* ♦ **serum** (NOTE: The plural is **antisera.**)

**antisocial** /,æntɪ'səʊʃ(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to behaviour which is harmful to other people

**antispasmodic** /,æntɪspæz'mɒdɪk/ *noun* a drug used to prevent spasms

**antitetanus serum** /æntɪ'tetənəs ,sɪərəm/ *noun* a serum which protects a patient against tetanus. Abbreviation **ATS**

**antithrombin** /ænti'θrɒmbɪn/ *noun* a substance present in the blood which prevents clotting

**antitoxic serum** /,æntitɒksɪk 'sɪərəm/ *noun* an immunising agent, formed of serum taken from an animal which has developed antibodies to a disease, used to protect a person from that disease

**antitoxin** /,ænti'tɒksɪn/ *noun* an antibody produced by the body to counteract a poison in the body

**antitragus** /,ænti'treɪgəs/ *noun* a small projection on the outer ear opposite the tragus

**antitussive** /,ænti'tʌsɪv/ *noun* a drug used to reduce coughing

**antivenin** /,ænti'venɪn/, **antivenom** /,ænti'venəm/, **antivenene** /,æntivə'ni:n/ *noun* a substance which helps the body to fight the effects of a particular venom from a snake or insect bite

**antiviral** /,ænti'vaɪrəl/ *adjective* referring to a drug or treatment which stops or reduces the damage caused by a virus ■ *noun* same as **antiviral drug**

**antiviral drug** /,ænti'vaɪrəl drʌg/ *noun* a drug which is effective against a virus (NOTE: Antiviral drugs have names ending in **-ciclovir**.)

**antral** /'æntərəl/ *adjective* referring to an antrum

**antrectomy** /æn'trektəmi/ *noun* the surgical removal of an antrum in the stomach to prevent gastrin being formed

**antroscopy** /æn'trɒskəpi/ *noun* an examination of an antrum

**antrostomy** /æn'trɒstəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to make an opening in the maxillary sinus to drain an antrum

**antrum** /'æntɾəm/ *noun* any cavity inside the body, especially one in bone (NOTE: The plural is **antra**.)

**anuria** /æn'juəriə/ *noun* a condition in which the patient does not make urine, either because of a deficiency in the kidneys or because the urinary tract is blocked

**anus** /'eɪnəs/ *noun* a short passage after the rectum at the end of the alimentary canal, leading outside the body between the buttocks and through which faeces are passed. See illustration at **DIGESTIVE SYSTEM** in Supplement, **UROGENITAL SYSTEM (MALE)** in Supplement (NOTE: For other terms referring to the anus, see **anal** and words beginning with **ano-**.)

**anvil** /'ænvɪl/ *noun* same as **incus**

**anxiety** /æŋ'zaɪəti/ *noun* the state of being very worried and afraid

**anxiety disorder** /æŋ'zaɪəti dɪs,ɔ:də/ *noun* a mental disorder where someone is very worried and afraid, e.g. a phobia

**anxiety neurosis** /æŋ'zaɪəti nju,rəʊsɪs/ *noun* a neurotic condition where the patient is anxious and has morbid fears

**anxiolytic** /,æŋksɪə'lɪtɪk/ *noun* a drug used in the treatment of anxiety ■ *adjective* treating anxiety

**aorta** /eɪ'ɔ:tə/ *noun* the main artery in the body, which sends blood containing oxygen from the heart to other blood vessels around the body. See illustration at **HEART** in Supplement

**aortic** /eɪ'ɔ:tɪk/ *adjective* relating to the aorta

**aortic aneurysm** /eɪ,ɔ:tɪk ,ænjə'rɪz(ə)m/ *noun* a serious aneurysm of the aorta, associated with atherosclerosis

**aortitis** /,eɪɔ:'taɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the aorta

**aortography** /,eɪɔ:'tɒgrəfi/ *noun* an X-ray examination of the aorta after an opaque substance has been injected into it

**apathetic** /,æpə'tetɪk/ *adjective* referring to a person who takes no interest in anything

**apathy** /'æpəθi/ *noun* the condition of not being interested in anything, or of not wanting to do anything

**aperient** /ə'pɛriənt/ *noun* a substance which causes a bowel movement, e.g. a laxative or purgative ■ *adjective* causing a bowel movement

**aperistalsis** /,eɪpɛrɪ'stælsɪs/ *noun* a lack of the peristaltic movement in the bowel

**Apert's syndrome** /'æpɜ:ts ,sɪndrəʊm/ *noun* a condition in which the skull grows tall and the lower part of the face is underdeveloped

**aperture** /'æpətʃəl/ *noun* a hole

**apex** /'eɪpeks/ *noun* 1. the top of the heart or lung 2. the end of the root of a tooth

**Apgar score** /'æpɡɑ: skɔ:/ *noun* a method of judging the condition of a newborn baby in which the baby is given a maximum of two points on each of five criteria: colour of the skin, heartbeat, breathing, muscle tone and reaction to stimuli [Described 1952. After Virginia Apgar (1909–74), US anaesthesiologist.]

**APH** *abbreviation* antepartum haemorrhage

**aphagia** /eɪ'feɪdʒɪə/ *noun* a condition in which a person is unable to swallow

**aphakia** /eɪ'feɪkiə/ *noun* the absence of the crystalline lens in the eye

**aphakic** /eɪ'feɪkɪk/ *adjective* referring to aphakia

**aphasia** /eɪ'feɪziə/ *noun* a condition in which a person is unable to speak or write, or to understand speech or writing because of damage to the brain centres controlling speech

**aphonia** /eɪ'fəʊniə/ *noun* a condition in which a person is unable to make sounds

**aphrodisiac** /,æfrə'dɪziæk/ *noun* a substance which increases sexual urges ■ *adjective* increasing sexual desire

**aphtha** /'æfθə/ *noun* a small white ulcer which appears in groups in the mouth in people who have the fungal condition thrush (NOTE: The plural is **apthae**.)

**aphthous stomatitis** /,æfθəs, stəʊmə'taɪtɪs/ *noun* canker sores which affect the mucous membrane in the mouth

**apical** /'æpɪk(ə)/ *adjective* situated at the top or tip of something

**apical abscess** /,æpɪk(ə)l 'æbses/ *noun* an abscess in the socket around the root of a tooth

**apicectomy** /,æpɪ'sektəmi/ *noun* the surgical removal of the root of a tooth

**aplasia** /eɪ'pleɪziə/ *noun* a lack of growth of tissue

**aplastic** /eɪ'plæstɪk/ *adjective* unable to develop new cells or tissue

**aplastic anaemia** /eɪ,plæstɪk ə'ni:miə/ *noun* anaemia caused by the bone marrow failing to form red blood cells

**apnea** /æp'ni:ə/ *noun* US same as **apnoea**

**apnoea** /æp'ni:ə/ *noun* the stopping of breathing (NOTE: The US spelling is **apnea**.)

**apnoeic** /æp'ni:ɪk/ *adjective* where breathing has stopped

**apocrine** /'æpəkraɪn/ *adjective* referring to apocrine glands

**apocrine gland** /'æpəkraɪn glænd/ *noun* a gland producing body odour where parts of the gland's cells break off with the secretions, e.g. a sweat gland

**apocrinitis** /,æpəkrɪ'naitɪs/ *noun* the formation of abscesses in the sweat glands

**apomorphine** /,æpəʊ'mɔ:fi:n/ *noun* a substance that comes from morphine, used to make a person cough, sleep or be sick (NOTE: It is administered under the skin and is used to treat drug overdose, accidental poisoning and Parkinson's disease.)

**aponeurosis** /,æpəʊnju'rəʊsɪs/ *noun* a band of tissue which attaches muscles to each other

**apophyseal** /æpə'fɪziəl/ *adjective* referring to apophysis

**apophysis** /ə'pɒfəʊsɪs/ *noun* a growth of bone, not at a joint

**apophysitis** /æpəfɪ'saɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of an apophysis

**apoplexy** /'æpəpleksi/ *noun* same as **cerebrovascular accident** (dated)

**apoptosis** /ə'pɒptəʊsɪs/ *noun* a form of cell death that is necessary both to make room for new cells and to remove cells whose DNA has been damaged and which may become cancerous

**appendage** /ə'pendɪdʒ/ *noun* a part of the body or piece of tissue which hangs down from another part

**appendiceal** /,ɪæpən'dɪsiəl/ *adjective* relating to the appendix ○ *There is a risk of appendiceal infection.*

**appendectomy** /ə,pendɪ'sektəmi/ *noun* the surgical removal of an appendix

**appendicitis** /ə,pendɪ'saɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the vermiform appendix

**appendicular** /,ɪæpən'dɪkjʊlə/ *adjective* **1.** referring to body parts which are associated with the arms and legs **2.** relating to the appendix

**appendicular skeleton** /,ɪæpen,dɪkjʊlə 'skelɪt(ə)n/ *noun* part of the skeleton, formed of the pelvic girdle, pectoral girdle and the bones of the arms and legs. Compare **axial skeleton**

**appendix** /ə'pendɪks/ *noun* **1.** a small tube attached to the caecum which serves no function but can become infected, causing appendicitis. Also called **vermiform appendix**. See illustration at **DIGESTIVE SYSTEM** in Supplement **2.** any small tube or sac hanging from an organ

**apperception** /,æpə'sepʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the conscious recognition of a stimulus

**appetite** /'æpɪtaɪt/ *noun* the feeling of wanting food

**applanation tonometry** /æplə,neɪʃ(ə)n tə 'nɒmətri/ *noun* the measuring of the thickness of the cornea

**appliance** /ə'plaiəns/ *noun* a piece of apparatus used on the body ○ *He was wearing a surgical appliance to support his neck.*

**applicator** /'æplɪkeɪtə/ *noun* an instrument for applying a substance

**apposition** /,æpə'zɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* **1.** the relative positioning of two things **2.** cell growth in which layers of new material are deposited on existing ones

**appraisal** /ə'preɪz(ə)/ *noun* a judgment or opinion on something or somebody, especially one which decides how effective or useful they are

**apprehension** /,æpɪ'rehɪŋ(ə)n/ *noun* a feeling of anxiety or fear that something bad or unpleasant will happen

**apraxia** /eɪ'præksɪə/ *noun* a condition in which someone is unable to make proper movements

**apyrexia** /,eɪpaɪ'reksɪə/ *noun* the absence of fever

**apyrexial** /,eɪpaɪ'reksɪəl/ *adjective* no longer having any fever

**aqua** /'ækwə/ *noun* water

**aqueduct** /'ækwɪdʌkt/ *noun* a tube which carries fluid from one part of the body to another

**aqueous** /'eɪkwɪəs, 'ækwɪəs/ *adjective* referring to a solution made with water ■ *noun* a fluid in the eye between the lens and the cornea

**aqueous humour** /,eɪkwɪəs 'hju:mə/ *noun* same as **aqueous**. See illustration at **EYE** in Supplement

**AR** *abbreviation* attributable risk

**arachidonic acid** /ə,rækɪdɒnɪk 'æsɪd/ *noun* an essential fatty acid

**arachnodactyly** /ə,ræknəʊ'dæktɪli/ *noun* a congenital condition in which the fingers and toes are long and thin

**arachnoid** /ə'ræknoɪd/ *noun* the middle of the three membranes covering the brain. † **dura mater**

**arachnoiditis** /ə,ræknoɪ'daɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the arachnoid

**arachnoid mater** /ə,ræknoɪd 'meɪtə/, **arachnoid membrane** /ə'ræknoɪd ,membreɪn/ *noun* same as **arachnoid**

**arachnoid villi** /ə,ræknoɪd 'vɪli/ *plural noun* villi in the arachnoid which absorb cerebrospinal fluid

**arborisation** /,ɑ:bəraɪ'zeɪʃ(ə)n/, **arborization** *noun* the branching ends of some nerve fibres, of a motor nerve in muscle fibre or of venules, capillaries and arterioles

**arbovirus** /'ɑ:bəvaɪrəs/ *noun* a virus transmitted by blood-sucking insects

**arc** /ɑ:k/ *noun* a nerve pathway

**ARC** *abbreviation* AIDS-related complex or AIDS-related condition

**arch** /ɑ:tʃ/ *noun* a curved part of the body, especially under the foot

**arch-** /ɑ:tʃ/ *prefix* chief, most important

**arcuate** /'ɑ:kjuət/ *adjective* arched

**arcuate artery** /'ɑ:kjuət ,ɑ:təri/ *noun* a curved artery in the foot or kidney

**arcuate ligaments** /'ɑ:kjuət ,ɑ:təri/ *plural noun* three ligaments forming a fibrous arch to which the diaphragm is attached

**arcus** /'ɑ:kəs/ *noun* an arch

**arcus senilis** /,ɑ:kəs sə'naɪlɪs/ *noun* an opaque circle around the cornea of the eye which can develop in old age

**ARDS** /ɑ:dz/ *abbreviation* adult respiratory distress syndrome

**areola** /ə'ri:ələ/ *noun* the coloured part round a nipple

**areolar tissue** /ə'ri:ələ ,tɪʃu: / *noun* a type of connective tissue

**arginine** /'ɑ:dʒɪni:n/ *noun* an amino acid which helps the liver form urea

**Argyll Robertson pupil** /ɑ:gaɪl 'rɒbətəsən ,pju:p(ə)/ *noun* a condition of the eye, in which the lens is able to focus but the pupil does not react to light. It is a symptom of tertiary syphilis or of locomotor ataxia.

**ariboflavinosis** /eɪ,rɪbəʊfleɪvɪ'nəʊsɪs/ *noun* a condition caused by not having enough vitamin B<sub>2</sub>. The symptoms are very oily skin and hair and small cuts in the mouth.

**Arnold-Chiari malformation** /,ɑ:nəld ki 'eəri mælfɔ: ,meɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a congenital condition in which the base of the skull is malformed, allowing parts of the cerebellum into the spinal canal [Described 1894. After Julius A. Arnold (1835–1915), Professor of Pathological Anatomy at Heidelberg, Germany, and Hans von Chiari (1851–1916), Professor of Pathological Anatomy at Strasbourg and later at Prague, Czech Republic.]

**aromatherapy** /ə,rəʊmə'therəpi/ *noun* treatment to relieve tension and promote wellbeing in which fragrant oils and creams containing plant extracts are massaged into the skin

**arousal** /ə'raʊz(ə)l/ *noun* 1. feelings and physical signs of sexual desire 2. the act of waking up from sleep, unconsciousness or a drowsy state

**arrector pili** /ə,rektə 'paɪlaɪ ,mæs(ə)l/ *noun* a small muscle which contracts and makes the hair on the skin stand up when someone is cold or afraid

**arrest** /ə'rest/ *noun* the stopping of a bodily function. † **cardiac arrest**

**arrhythmia** /ə'rɪðmiə/ *noun* a variation in the rhythm of the heartbeat

**arsenic** /'ɑ:sɪnɪk/ *noun* a chemical element which forms poisonous compounds such as arsenic trioxide and which was formerly used in some medicines (NOTE: The chemical symbol is **As.**)

**artefact** /'ɑ:tɪfækt/ *noun* something which is made or introduced artificially

**arter-** /ɑ:tə/ *prefix* same as **arterio-** (used before vowels)

**arterial** /ɑ:'tɪəriəl/ *adjective* relating to arteries

**arterial haemorrhage** /ɑ:,tɪəriəl 'hem(ə)rɪdʒ/ *noun* a haemorrhage of bright red blood from an artery

**arteriectomy** /ɑ:,tɪəri'ektəmi/ *noun* the surgical removal of an artery or part of an artery

**arterio-** /ɑ:tɪəriəʊ/ *prefix* referring to arteries

**arteriogram** /ɑ:'tɪəriəʊgræm/ *noun* an X-ray photograph of an artery, taken after injection with an opaque dye

**arteriography** /ɑ:,tɪəri'ɒgrəfi/ *noun* the work of taking X-ray photographs of arteries after injection with an opaque dye

**arteriole** /ɑ:'tɪəriəʊl/ *noun* a very small artery

**arteriopathy** /ɑ:,tɪəri'ɒpəθi/ *noun* a disease of an artery

**arterioplasty** /ɑ:'tɪəriəʊplæsti/ *noun* plastic surgery to make good a damaged or blocked artery

**arteriorrhaphy** /ɑ:,tɪəri'ɔ:rəfi/ *noun* the act of stitching an artery

**arteriosclerosis** /ɑ:,tɪəriəʊsklə'rəʊsɪs/ *noun* the arterial disease atherosclerosis (*dated*)

**arteriotomy** /ɑːtɪəri'ɒtəmi/ *noun* a puncture made in the wall of an artery

**arteriovenous** /ɑːtɪəriəv'vi:nəs/ *adjective* referring to both an artery and a vein

**arteritis** /,ɑːtə'raɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the walls of an artery

**artery** /'ɑːtəri/ *noun* a blood vessel taking blood from the heart to the tissues of the body

**arthr-** /ɑːθr/ *prefix* same as **arthro-** (used before vowels)

**arthralgia** /ɑː'θrælɟɪə/ *noun* pain in a joint

**arthrectomy** /ɑː'θrektəmi/ *noun* the surgical removal of a joint

**arthritic** /ɑː'θrɪtɪk/ *adjective* affected by or relating to arthritis ○ *She has an arthritic hip.* ■ *noun* a person suffering from arthritis

**arthritis** /ɑː'θraɪtɪs/ *noun* a painful inflammation of a joint. ⚔ **osteoarthritis**, **rheumatoid arthritis**

**arthro-** /ɑːθrəʊ/ *prefix* referring to a joint

**arthroclasia** /,ɑːθrəʊ'kleɪzɪə/ *noun* removal of ankylosis in a joint

**arthrodesis** /,ɑːθrəʊ'diːsɪs/ *noun* a surgical operation in which a joint is fused in position, so preventing pain from movement

**arthrodynia** /,ɑːθrəʊ'dɪniə/ *noun* pain in a joint

**arthrography** /ɑː'θrɒgrəfi/ *noun* X-ray photography of a joint

**arthrogryposis** /,ɑːθrɒgrɪ'pəʊsɪs/ *noun* a group of disorders in which movement becomes progressively restricted

**arthropathy** /ɑː'θrɒpəθi/ *noun* a disease in a joint

**arthroplasty** /'ɑːθrəʊplæsti/ *noun* a surgical operation to repair or replace a joint

**arthroscope** /'ɑːθrəʊskəʊp/ *noun* an instrument which is inserted into the cavity of a joint to inspect it

**arthroscopy** /ɑː'θrɒskəpi/ *noun* a procedure to examine the inside of a joint by means of an arthroscope

**arthrosis** /ɑː'θrəʊsɪs/ *noun* the degeneration of a joint

**arthrotomy** /ɑː'θrɒtəmi/ *noun* a procedure that involves cutting into a joint to drain pus

**articular** /ɑː'tɪkjʊlə/ *adjective* referring to joints

**articular cartilage** /ɑː'tɪkjʊlə 'kɑːtɪlɪdʒ/ *noun* a layer of cartilage at the end of a bone where it forms a joint with another bone. See illustration at **BONE STRUCTURE** in Supplement, **SYNOVIAL JOINT** in Supplement

**articulate** /ɑː'tɪkjʊleɪt/ *verb* to be linked with another bone in a joint

**articulation** /ɑː'tɪkjʊ'leɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a joint or series of joints

**artificial** /,ɑːtɪfɪʃ(ə)l/ *adjective* 1. made by humans and not a natural part of the body ○ *artificial cartilage* ○ *artificial kidney* ○ *artificial leg* 2. happening not as a natural process but through action by a doctor or another person or a machine ○ *artificial feeding*

**artificial insemination** /,ɑːtɪfɪʃ(ə)l ɪn'seɪmɪ'neɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the introduction of semen into a woman's uterus by artificial means

**artificial insemination by donor** /,ɑːtɪfɪʃ(ə)l ɪn'seɪmɪ,neɪʃ(ə)n baɪ 'dɒʊnə/ *noun* same as **donor insemination**. Abbreviation **AID**

**artificial insemination by husband** /,ɑːtɪfɪʃ(ə)l ɪn'seɪmɪ,neɪʃ(ə)n baɪ 'hʌzbənd/ *noun* artificial insemination using the semen of the husband. Abbreviation **AIH**

**artificial lung** /,ɑːtɪfɪʃ(ə)l 'lʌŋ/ *noun* a machine through which a person's deoxygenated blood is passed to absorb oxygen to take back to the bloodstream

**artificial respiration** /,ɑːtɪfɪʃ(ə)l ,respɪ'reɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a way of reviving someone who has stopped breathing, e.g. mouth-to-mouth resuscitation

**artificial rupture of membranes** /,ɑːtɪfɪʃ(ə)l ,rʌptʃər əv 'membreɪnz/ *noun* the breaking of the amniotic sac with an amnihook, so releasing the amniotic fluid

**arytenoid** /,æri'tiːnɔɪd/ *adjective* located at the back of the larynx

**arytenoid cartilage** /,æri'tiːnɔɪd ,kɑːtɪlɪdʒ/ *noun* a small cartilage at the back of the larynx

**arytenoidectomy** /,æri'tiːnɔɪd'ektəmi/ *noun* an operation to remove the arytenoid cartilage

**asbestosis** /,æsbə'stəʊsɪs/ *noun* a disease of the lungs caused by inhaling asbestos dust

**ascariasis** /,æskə'reɪsɪs/ *noun* a disease of the intestine and sometimes the lungs, caused by infestation with *Ascaris lumbricoides*

**Ascaris lumbricoides** /,æskærɪs lʌmbri'kɔɪdiːz/ *noun* a type of large roundworm which is a parasite in the human intestine

**ascending aorta** /ə'sendɪŋ eɪ'ɔːtə/ *noun* the first section of the aorta as it leaves the heart and turns upwards. Compare **descending aorta**

**ascending colon** /ə'sendɪŋ 'kəʊlɒn/ *noun* the first part of the colon which goes up the right side of the body from the caecum. Compare **descending colon**. See illustration at **DIGESTIVE SYSTEM** in Supplement

**Aschoff nodules** /'æʃɒf ,nɒdjuːlz/, **Aschoff's nodules** /'æʃɒfs ,nɒdjuːlz/ *plural noun* nodules which are formed mainly in or near the heart in rheumatic fever

**ascites** /ə'saɪtiːz/ *noun* an unusual accumulation of fluid from the blood in the peritoneal cavity, occurring in heart and kidney failure or as a result of malignancy



**ascorbic acid** /ə,skɔːbɪk 'æːsɪd/ *noun* same as **Vitamin C**

**ASD** *abbreviation* autistic spectrum disorders

**-ase** /eɪz, eɪs/ *suffix* enzyme

**asepsis** /eɪ'sepsɪs/ *noun* the absence of micro-organisms which cause infection, usually achieved by sterilisation

**aseptic** /eɪ'septɪk/ *adjective* sterilised, or involving sterilisation, and therefore without infection

**aseptic technique** /eɪ'septɪk tek'nɪks/ *noun* a method of doing something using sterilised equipment

**asexual** /eɪ'sekʃuəl/ *adjective* not sexual, not involving sexual intercourse

**Asian flu** /,eɪʒ(ə)n 'fluː/ *noun* ▶ **flu**

**-asis** /ə'sɪs/ ▶ **-iasis**

**asparagine** /ə'spærədʒɪːn/ *noun* an amino acid

**aspartame** /ə'spɑːteɪm/ *noun* a protein produced from aspartic acid, used to make substances sweeter

**aspartate aminotransferase** /ə'spɑːteɪ ə'mɪːnəʊ'trænsfəreɪz/ *noun* an enzyme found in heart muscle, liver cells, skeletal muscle cells and some other tissues. It is used in the diagnosis of liver disease and heart attacks.

**aspartic acid** /ə'spɑːtɪk 'æːsɪd/ *noun* an amino acid

**aspect** /'æspekt/ *noun* a direction from which the body is viewed, e.g. the view from above is the 'superior aspect'

**Asperger's syndrome** /'æspɜːdʒɪz ,sɪndrəʊm/ *noun* a developmental disorder characterised by difficulty in social interaction and a restricted range of interests, more common in boys than girls [Described 1944. After Hans Asperger (1906–80), Austrian psychiatrist.]

**aspergillosis** /,æspɜːdʒɪ'ləʊsɪs/ *noun* infection of the lungs with the fungus *Aspergillus*

**aspermia** /eɪ'spɜːmiə/ *noun* the absence of sperm in semen

**asphyxia** /æ'sfɪksɪə/ *noun* a condition in which someone is prevented from breathing, e.g. by strangulation or breathing poisonous gas, and therefore cannot take oxygen into the bloodstream

**asphyxiation** /əs,fɪksɪ'eɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the state of being prevented from breathing, or the act of preventing someone from breathing. ▶ **suffocation**

**aspiration** /,æspɪ'reɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* **1.** the act of removing fluid from a cavity in the body, often using a hollow needle **2.** same as **vacuum suction**

**aspirator** /'æspɪreɪtə/ *noun* an instrument used to suck fluid out of a cavity such as the mouth or the site of an operation

**aspirin** /'æsprɪn/ *noun* a common pain-killing drug, or a tablet containing this drug. Also called **acetylsalicylic acid**

**assay** /'æseɪ, ə'seɪ/ *noun* the testing of a substance. ▶ **bioassay**, **immunoassay**

**assessment** /ə'sesmənt/ *noun* **1.** a judgment about something ○ *Further treatment will be based on your doctor's assessment of your condition.* **2.** a method of deciding whether a student is learning and progressing well ○ *continuous assessment*

**assimilation** /ə,sɪmɪ'leɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the action of assimilating food substances

**assisted suicide** /ə,sɪstɪd 'suːrɪsaɪd/ *noun* the suicide of someone who is terminally ill with the help of a doctor or friend at the request of the person who is dying

**associate** /ə'səʊsɪeɪt/ *verb* to be related to or connected with something ○ *side effects which may be associated with the drug* ○ *The condition is often associated with diabetes.*

**associate nurse** /ə,səʊsɪət 'nɜːs/ *noun* a nurse who assists a primary nurse by carrying out agreed care for someone based on a plan designed by a primary nurse

**asthenia** /æ'sθɪːniə/ *noun* a condition in which someone is weak and does not have any strength

**asthenic** /æ'sθenɪk/ *adjective* referring to a general condition in which someone has no strength and no interest in things

**asthenopia** /,æsthɪ'nəʊpiə/ *noun* same as **eye-strain**

**asthma** /'æsmə/ *noun* a lung condition characterised by narrowing of the bronchial tubes, in which the muscles go into spasm and the person has difficulty breathing. ▶ **cardiac asthma**

**asthmatic** /æ'smætɪk/ *adjective* having the lung disease asthma, or relating to asthma ○ *He has an asthmatic attack every spring.* ■ *noun* a person who has asthma

**asthmaticus** /æ'smætɪkəs/ *adjective* ▶ **status asthmaticus**

**astigmatism** /ə'stɪgmətɪz(ə)m/ *noun* a condition in which the eye cannot focus vertical and horizontal lines simultaneously, leading to blurring of vision

**astringent** /ə'strɪndʒənt/ *noun* a substance which makes the skin tissues contract and harden ■ *adjective* referring to an astringent

**astrocyte** /'æstrəsaɪt/ *noun* a star-shaped cell of the connective tissue of the nervous system

**astrocytoma** /,æstrəsaɪ'təʊmə/ *noun* a type of brain tumour which develops slowly in the connective tissue of the nervous system

**asymmetric** /,æsi'metrɪk/ *adjective* shaped or arranged so that the two sides do not match or balance each other

**asymmetry** /æ'sɪmətri/ *noun* a state in which the two sides of the body or of an organ do not resemble each other

**asymptomatic** /,eɪsɪmptə'mætɪk/ *adjective* not showing any symptoms of disease

**asynclitism** /æ'sɪŋklɪtɪz(ə)m/ *noun* in childbirth, a situation in which the head of the baby enters the vagina at an angle

**asynergia** /,æsi'nɜːdʒə/, **asynergy** /æ'sɪnədʒi/ *noun* awkward movements and bad coordination, caused by a disorder of the cerebellum. Also called **dyssynergia**

**asystole** /eɪ'sɪstəli/ *noun* a state in which the heart has stopped beating

**ataractic** /,ætə'ræktɪk/ *noun* a drug which has a calming effect ■ *adjective* calming

**ataraxia** /,ætə'ræksɪə/, **ataraxis** /,ætə'ræksɪs/ *noun* the state of being calm and not worrying

**ataraxic** /,ætə'ræksɪk/ *noun, adjective* same as **ataractic**

**ataxia** /ə'tæksɪə/ *noun* a failure of the brain to control movements

**ataxic** /ə'tæksɪk/ *adjective* having ataxia, or relating to ataxia

**ataxic gait** /ə'tæksɪk 'geɪt/ *noun* a way of walking in which the person walks unsteadily due to a disorder of the nervous system

**ataxy** /ə'tæksɪ/ *noun* same as **ataxia**

**atelectasis** /,ætə'lektəsɪs/ *noun* the failure of a lung to expand properly

**atenolol** /ə'tenənl/ *noun* a drug used in controlling blood pressure and angina

**arteriovenous malformation** /ɑːtɪəriəʊ'veɪnəs mæl'fɔːmeɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a condition in which the arteries and veins in the brain are not properly formed, leading to strokes or epilepsy. Abbreviation **AVM**

**atherogenic** /,æθərəv'dʒenɪk/ *adjective* referring to something which may produce atheroma

**atheroma** /,æθə'rəʊmə/ *noun* thickening of the walls of an artery by deposits of a fatty substance such as cholesterol

**atheromatous** /,æθə'rɒmətəs/ *adjective* referring to atheroma

**atherosclerosis** /,æθərəʊsklə'rəʊsɪs/ *noun* a condition in which deposits of fats and minerals form on the walls of an artery, especially the aorta or one of the coronary or cerebral arteries, and prevent blood from flowing easily

**atherosclerotic** /,æθərəʊsklə'rɒtɪk/ *adjective* referring to atherosclerosis

**athetosis** /,æθə'təʊsɪs/ *noun* repeated slow movements of the limbs, caused by a brain disorder such as cerebral palsy

**athlete's foot** /,æθli:t 'fʊt/ *noun* an infectious skin disorder between the toes, caused by a fungus. Also called **tinea pedis**

**atlas** /'ætləs/ *noun* the top vertebra in the spine, which supports the skull and pivots on the axis or second vertebra

**atom** /'ætəm/ *noun* the smallest part into which an element can be divided and still keep its properties. It consists of a dense, positively charged nucleus surrounded by a system of electrons.

**atomiser** /'ætəmaɪzə/ *noun* an instrument which sprays liquid in the form of very small drops like mist. Also called **nebuliser**

**atony** /'ætəni/ *noun* a lack of tone or tension in the muscles

**atopen** /'ætəpen/ *noun* an allergen which causes an atopy

**atopic eczema** /eɪ,tɒpɪk 'eksɪmə/, **atopic dermatitis** /eɪ,tɒpɪk dɜːmə'taɪtɪs/ *noun* a type of eczema often caused by a hereditary allergy

**atopy** /'ætəpi/ *noun* a hereditary allergic reaction

**ATP** *abbreviation* adenosine triphosphate

**atracurium** /,ætɹə'kjʊəriəm/ *noun* a drug used as a relaxant

**atresia** /ə'triːziə/ *noun* an unusual closing or absence of a tube in the body

**atretic** /ə'tretɪk/ *adjective* referring to atresia

**atri-** /eɪtri/ *prefix* referring to an atrium

**atrial** /'eɪtriəl/ *adjective* referring to one or both of the atria of the heart

**atrial fibrillation** /,eɪtriəl faɪbrɪ'leɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a rapid uncoordinated fluttering of the atria of the heart, which causes an irregular heartbeat

**atrioventricular** /,eɪtriəʊven'trɪkjʊlə/ *adjective* referring to the atria and ventricles

**atrioventricular bundle** /,eɪtriəʊven'trɪkjʊlə 'bʌnd(ə)l/ *noun* a bundle of modified cardiac muscle which conducts impulses from the atrioventricular node to the septum and then divides to connect with the ventricles. Also called **AV bundle, bundle of His**

**atrioventricular node** /,eɪtriəʊven'trɪkjʊlə 'nəʊd/ *noun* a mass of conducting tissue in the right atrium of the heart, which continues as the atrioventricular bundle and passes impulses from the atria to the ventricles. Also called **AV node**

**at-risk** /ət 'rɪsk/ *adjective* exposed to danger or harm of some kind ○ *at-risk children*

**atrium** /'eɪtriəm/ *noun* one of the two upper chambers in the heart. See illustration at **HEART** in Supplement

**atrophic cirrhosis** /æ,tɹɒfɪk sɪ'rəʊsɪs/ *noun* advanced portal cirrhosis in which the liver has become considerably smaller and clumps of new cells are formed on the surface of the liver where fibrous tissue has replaced damaged liver cells. Also called **hobnail liver**

**atrophy** /'ætɹəfi/ *noun* the wasting of an organ or part of the body ■ *verb* (of an organ or part of the body) to waste away

**atropine** /'ætrəpi:n/ *noun* an alkaloid substance derived from the poisonous plant belladonna and used, among other things, to enlarge the pupil of the eye, to reduce salivary and bronchial secretions during anaesthesia and as a muscarinic antagonist

**ATS** *abbreviation* antitetanus serum

**attack** /ə'tæk/ *noun* a sudden occurrence of an illness ○ *He had an attack of fever.* ○ *She had two attacks of laryngitis during the winter.*

**attention deficit disorder** /ə'tenʃən 'defɪsɪt dɪs,ɔ:də/ *noun* a condition in which a person is unable to concentrate, does things without considering their actions properly and has little confidence. It occurs mainly in children. *Abbreviation* **ADD**

**attention deficit hyperactivity disorder** /ə'tenʃən 'defɪsɪt 'haɪpə'rek'tɪvɪti dɪs,ɔ:də/ *noun* a condition in which a child has an inability to concentrate and shows disruptive behaviour. *Abbreviation* **ADHD**

**attention deficit syndrome** /ə'tenʃən 'defɪsɪt 'sɪndrəʊm/ *noun* same as **attention deficit disorder**

**attenuation** /ə'tenju'eɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a reduction in the effect or strength of something such as a virus, either because of environmental conditions or as a result of a laboratory procedure

**atticotomy** /,æ'tɪ'kɒtəmi/ *noun* the removal of the wall in the inner ear. Also called **cortical mastoidectomy**

**attitude** /'ætɪtju:d/ *noun* **1.** an opinion or general feeling about something ○ *a positive attitude towards the operation* **2.** a way of standing or sitting

**attributable risk** /ə'trɪbjʊtəb(ə)l 'rɪsk/ *noun* a measure of the excess risk of disease due to exposure to a particular risk. The excess risk of bacteriuria in oral contraceptive users attributable to the use of oral contraceptives is 1,566 per 100,000. *Abbreviation* **AR**

**atypical** /eɪ'tɪpɪk(ə)l/ *adjective* not usual or expected ○ *an atypical renal cyst*

**audio-** /ɔ:diəʊ/ *prefix* referring to hearing or sound

**audiogram** /'ɔ:diəgræm/ *noun* a graph drawn by an audiometer

**audiologist** /,ɔ:di'blɒdʒɪst/ *noun* a specialist who deals in the treatment of hearing disorders

**audiology** /,ɔ:di'blɒdʒɪ/ *noun* the scientific study of hearing, especially for diagnosing and treating hearing loss

**audiometer** /,ɔ:di'bɒmɪtəl/ *noun* an apparatus for testing hearing, especially for testing the range of sounds that the human ear can detect

**audiometry** /,ɔ:di'bɒmətri/ *noun* the science of testing hearing

**audit** /'ɔ:dt/ *noun* a check on figures, scientific data or procedures ○ *a medical audit regarding the outpatient appointment system*

**audit commission** /'ɔ:dt kə,mɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a government body which examines the accounts of public bodies such as hospital trusts to ensure that public money is being spent wisely

**audit cycle** /'ɔ:dt ,sɑ:k(ə)l/ *noun* the cycle in which medical topics are selected for review, observation and comparison with agreed standards and changes are decided on

**auditory** /'ɔ:dt(ə)ri/ *adjective* relating to hearing

**auditory acuity** /,ɔ:dt(ə)ri ə'kju:ɪti/ *noun* the ability to hear sounds clearly

**auditory canals** /,ɔ:dt(ə)ri kə'nælz/ *plural noun* the external and internal passages of the ear

**auditory nerve** /'ɔ:dt(ə)ri nɜ:v/ *noun* the eighth cranial nerve which governs hearing and balance. See illustration at **EAR** in Supplement. Also called **vestibulocochlear nerve**

**auditory ossicles** /,ɔ:dt(ə)ri 'ɒsɪk(ə)lz/ *plural noun* the three little bones, the malleus, incus and stapes, in the middle ear

**Auerbach's plexus** /,aʊəbɑ:k's 'pleksəs/ *noun* a group of nerve fibres in the intestine wall [Described 1862. After Leopold Auerbach (1828–97), Professor of Neuropathology at Breslau, now in Poland.]

**aura** /'ɔ:rə/ *noun* a warning sensation which is experienced before an attack of epilepsy, migraine or asthma

**aural** /'ɔ:rəl/ *adjective* referring to the ear

**auricle** /'ɔ:ɪk(ə)l/ *noun* the tip of each atrium in the heart

**auricular** /ɔ:'ɪkɪjələ/ *adjective* referring to the ear

**auricular vein** /ɔ:'ɪkɪjələ veɪn/ *noun* a vein which leads into the posterior facial vein

**auriscope** /'ɔ:ɪrɪskəʊp/ *noun* an instrument for examining the ear and eardrum. Also called **otoscope**

**auscultation** /,ɔ:skəl'teɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the act of listening to the sounds of the body using a stethoscope

**auscultatory** /ɔ:'skɒltət(ə)ri/ *adjective* referring to auscultation

**Australia antigen** /ɔ:'streɪliə ,æntɪdʒən/ *noun* an antigen produced on the surface of liver cells infected with the hepatitis B virus

**autism** /'ɔ:ɪz(ə)m/ *noun* a condition developing in childhood, characterised by difficulty in social interaction, language and communication problems, learning difficulties and obsessional repetitive behaviour (NOTE: Autism is more common in boys than in girls.)

**autistic** /ɔ:'tɪstɪk/ *adjective* affected by, or relating to, autism

**autistic spectrum disorders** /ɔːtɪstɪk ˌspektrəm dɪs'ɔːdəz/ *plural noun* autism in all its different forms and degrees of severity. Abbreviation **ASD**

**auto-** /ɔːtəʊ/ *prefix* self

**autoantibody** /ɔːtəʊ'æntɪbɒdɪ/ *noun* an antibody formed to attack antigens in the body's own cells

**autoclave** /ɔːtəʊkleɪv/ *noun* equipment for sterilising surgical instruments using heat under high pressure ■ *verb* to sterilise equipment using heat under high pressure ○ *Autoclaving is the best method of sterilisation.*

**autogenous** /ɔː'tɒdʒənəs/, **autogenic** /ɔːtəʊ'dʒenɪk/ *adjective* produced either in the person's body, or using tissue from the person's own body ○ *an autogenous vein graft*

**autograft** /ɔːtəʊgrɑːft/ *noun* a transplant made using parts of the person's own body

**autoimmune** /ɔːtəʊɪ'mjuːn/ *adjective* referring to an immune reaction in a person against antigens in their own cells

**autoimmune disease** /ɔːtəʊɪ'mjuːn dɪ'ziːz/ *noun* a disease in which the person's own cells are attacked by autoantibodies ○ *Rheumatoid arthritis is thought to be an autoimmune disease.*

**autoimmunisation** /ɔːtəʊɪ'mjuːnəɪ'zeɪʃ(ə)n/, **autoimmunization** *noun* the process leading to an immune reaction in a person to antigens produced in their own body

**autoimmunity** /ɔːtəʊɪ'mjuːnɪtɪ/ *noun* a condition in which a person's own cells are attacked by autoantibodies

**autoinfection** /ɔːtəʊɪn'fekʃ(ə)n/ *noun* an infection by a microorganism already in the body, or infection of one part of the body by another part

**autointoxication** /ɔːtəʊɪntɒksɪ'keɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the poisoning of the body by toxins produced in the body itself

**autologous** /ɔː'tɒləgəs/ *adjective* referring to a graft or other material coming from the same source

**autolysis** /ɔː'tɒləsɪs/ *noun* a situation in which cells destroy themselves with their own enzymes

**automatism** /ɔː'tɒmætɪz(ə)m/ *noun* a state in which a person acts without consciously knowing that he or she is acting

**autonomic** /ɔːtə'nɒmɪk/ *adjective* governing itself independently

**autonomic nervous system** /ɔːtə'nɒmɪk 'nɜːvəs ˌsɪstəm/ *noun* the nervous system formed of ganglia linked to the spinal column. It regulates the automatic functioning of the main organs such as the heart and lungs and works when a person is asleep or even unconscious. †

**parasympathetic nervous system, sympathetic nervous system**

**autonomy** /ɔː'tɒnəmi/ *noun* the state of being free to act as one wishes

**autoplasty** /ɔːtəʊplæstɪ/ *noun* the repair of someone's body using tissue taken from another part of their body

**autopsy** /ɔːtəʊpsɪ/ *noun* the examination of a dead body by a pathologist to find out the cause of death ○ *The autopsy showed that he had been poisoned.* Also called **post mortem**

**autosomal** /ɔːtəʊ'səʊm(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to an autosome

**autosome** /ɔːtəʊsəʊm/ *noun* a chromosome that is not a sex chromosome

**autotransfusion** /ɔːtəʊtræns'fjuːʒ(ə)n/ *noun* an infusion into a person of their own blood

**avascular** /eɪ'væskjʊlə/ *adjective* with no blood vessels, or with a deficient blood supply

**AV bundle** /eɪ 'viː 'bʌnd(ə)l/ *noun* same as **atrioventricular bundle**

**aversion therapy** /ə'vɜːʃ(ə)n θerəpi/ *noun* a treatment by which someone is cured of a type of behaviour by making him or her develop a great dislike for it

**avitaminosis** /eɪvɪtəmi'nəʊsɪs/ *noun* a disorder caused by a lack of vitamins

**AVM** *abbreviation* arteriovenous malformation

**AV node** /eɪ 'viː nɒd/ *noun* same as **atrioventricular node**

**AVPU** /eɪ viː piː 'juː/ *noun* a method of rating if a person is conscious: A = alert; V = verbal, responding to verbal commands; P = pain, responding to pain; U = unconscious

**avulsion** /ə'vʌljən/ *noun* an act of pulling away tissue or a body part by force

**avulsion fracture** /ə'vʌlj(ə)n 'fræktʃə/ *noun* a fracture in which a tendon pulls away part of the bone to which it is attached

**axial** /'æksɪəl/ *adjective* referring to an axis

**axial skeleton** /'æksɪəl 'skelɪt(ə)n/ *noun* the bones that make up the vertebral column and the skull. Compare **appendicular skeleton**

**axillary** /æk'sɪləri/ *adjective* referring to the armpit

**axis** /'æksɪs/ *noun **1.** an imaginary line through the centre of the body **2.** a central vessel which divides into other vessels **3.** the second vertebra on which the atlas sits (NOTE: The plural is **axes.**)*

**axon** /'æksɒn/ *noun* a nerve fibre which sends impulses from one neurone to another, linking with the dendrites of the other neurone. See illustration at **NEURONE** in Supplement

**azathioprine** /eɪzə'θaɪəprɪn/ *noun* a drug which suppresses the immune response, used after transplant surgery to prevent rejection

**-azepam** /æzɪpæm/ *suffix* used in names of benzodiazepines ○ *diazepam*

**azidothymidine** /,eɪzɪdʊθaɪmɪdiːn/ *noun* a drug used in the treatment of AIDS. Abbreviation **AZT**. Also called **zidovudine**

**azo-** /eɪzəʊ/ *prefix* containing a nitrogen group

**azoospermia** /eɪzəʊə'spɜːmiə/ *noun* the absence of sperm

**azoturia** /,eɪzəʊ'tʃʊəriə/ *noun* the presence of urea or other nitrogen compounds in the urine, caused by kidney disease

**AZT** *abbreviation* azidothymidine

**azygous** /'æzɪgəs/ *adjective* single, not one of a pair

**azygous vein** /'æzɪgəs veɪn/ *noun* a vein which brings blood back into the vena cava from the abdomen

# B

**Babinski reflex** /bəˈbɪnski ˈriːfleks/, **Babinski's reflex** /bəˈbɪnskiːz ˈriːfleks/ *noun* an unusual curling upwards of the big toe when a finger is lightly run across the sole of the foot, while the others turn down and spread out, a sign of hemiplegia and pyramidal tract disease. Compare **plantar reflex** [Described 1896. After Joseph François Felix Babinski (1857–1932), French-born son of Polish refugees. A pupil of Charcot, he was head of the Neurological clinic at Hôpital de la Pitié, 1890–1927.]

**Babinski test** /bəˈbɪnski test/ *noun* a test for a Babinski reflex

**baby** /ˈbeɪbi/ *noun* a very young child who is not yet old enough to talk or walk ○ *Babies start to walk when they are about 12 months old.* (NOTE: If you do not know the sex of a baby you can refer to the child as **it**: *The baby was sucking its thumb*)

**baby blues** /ˈbeɪbi bluːz/ *plural noun* same as **postnatal depression** (*informal*)

**bacillaemia** /ˌbæsiˈliːmiə/ *noun* an infection of the blood by bacilli

**bacillary** /bəˈsɪləri/ *adjective* referring to bacilli

**bacille Calmette-Guérin** /bæˌsiːl ˌkælmɛt ˈɡeræŋ/ *noun* full form of **BCG** [After A. Calmette (1863–1933) and C. Guérin (1872–1961), French bacteriologists.]

**bacilluria** /ˌbæsiˈljʊəriə/ *noun* the presence of bacilli in the urine

**bacillus** /bəˈsɪləs/ *noun* a bacterium shaped like a rod (NOTE: The plural is **bacilli**.)

**back** /bæk/ *noun* 1. the part of the body from the neck downwards to the waist, which is made up of the spine and the bones attached to it (NOTE: For other terms referring to the back, see **dorsal** and words beginning with **dorsi-**, **dorso-**.) 2. the other side from the front ○ *She has a swelling on the back of her hand.* † **dorsum**

**backache** /ˈbækɛɪk/ *noun* pain in the back, often without a specific cause

**backbone** /ˈbækbəʊn/ *noun* a series of bones, the vertebrae, linked together to form a flexible column running from the pelvis to the skull. Also called **rachis**, **spine**

**background carboxyhaemoglobin level** /ˌbækgraʊnd kɑːbɒksi hiːməˈgləʊbɪn ˌlev(ə)l/ *noun* the level of carboxyhaemoglobin in the blood of a person who is not exposed to high levels of carbon monoxide

**back pain** /ˈbæk peɪn/ *noun* pain in the back, especially long-lasting or severe pain

**backside** /ˈbæksaɪd/ *noun* someone's buttocks (*informal*)

**back strain** /ˈbæk streɪn/ *noun* a condition in which the muscles or ligaments in the back have been strained

**bacteraemia** /bæktəˈriːmiə/ *noun* the fact of having bacteria in the blood. Bacteraemia is not necessarily a serious condition. Compare **septicaemia**

**bacteria** /bæktˈɪəriə/ *plural of bacterium*

**bacterial** /bæktˈɪəriəl/ *adjective* relating to bacteria or caused by bacteria ○ *Children with sickle-cell anaemia are susceptible to bacterial infection.*

**bacterial plaque** /bæktˈɪəriəl ˌplæk/ *noun* a hard smooth bacterial deposit on teeth

**bactericidal** /bæktˌɪəriˈsaɪdəl/ *adjective* referring to a substance which destroys bacteria

**bactericide** /bæktˈɪəriˈsaɪd/ *noun* a substance which destroys bacteria

**bacteriological** /bæktɪəriəˈlɒdʒɪk(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to bacteriology

**bacteriologist** /bæktˌɪəriˈdɒlədʒɪst/ *noun* a doctor who specialises in the study of bacteria

**bacteriology** /bæktˌɪəriˈdɒlədʒi/ *noun* the scientific study of bacteria

**bacteriolysin** /bæktˌɪəriˈdɪlɪsɪn/ *noun* a protein, usually an immunoglobulin, which destroys bacterial cells

**bacteriolysis** /bæktˌɪəriˈdɪlɪsɪs/ *noun* the destruction of bacterial cells

**bacteriolytic** /bæktˌɪəriəˈlɪtɪk/ *adjective* referring to a substance which can destroy bacteria

**bacteriophage** /bæktˈɪəriəfeɪdʒ/ *noun* a virus which affects bacteria

**bacteriostatic** /bæk,tɪəriəʊ'stætɪk/ *adjective* referring to a substance which does not kill bacteria but stops them from multiplying

**bacterium** /bæk'tɪəriəm/ *noun* a microscopic organism. Some types are permanently present in the gut and can break down food tissue, but many can cause disease. (NOTE: The plural is **bacteria**.)

COMMENT: Bacteria can be shaped like rods (bacilli), like balls (cocci) or have a spiral form (spirochaetes). Bacteria, especially bacilli and spirochaetes, can move and reproduce very rapidly.

**bacteriuria** /bæk,tɪəri'jʊəriə/ *noun* a condition in which bacteria are present in the urine

**Bactrim** /'bæktɪrɪm/ a trade name for co-trimoxazole

**Baghdad boil** /,bægdæd 'bɔɪl/, **Baghdad sore** /,bægdæd 'sɔ:/ *noun* a skin disease of tropical countries caused by the parasite *Leishmania*. Also called **Oriental sore**

**BAHA** *abbreviation* bone anchored hearing aid

**Baker's cyst** /,beɪkəz 'sɪst/ *noun* a swelling filled with synovial fluid, at the back of the knee, caused by weakness of the joint membrane [Described 1877. After William Morrant Baker (1838–96), member of staff at St Bartholomew's Hospital, London, UK]

**baker's itch** /,beɪkəz 'ɪtʃ/, **baker's dermatitis** /'beɪkəz dɜ:mə'taɪtɪs/ *noun* an irritation of the skin caused by handling yeast

**BAL** *abbreviation* British anti-lewisite

**balanced diet** /,bælənst 'daɪət/ *noun* a diet which provides all the nutrients needed in the correct proportions

**balanitis** /,bælə'nɑɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the glans of the penis

**balanoposthitis** /,bælənəʊpɒs'thaɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the foreskin and the end of the penis

**balantidiasis** /,bæləntɪ'daɪəɪsɪs/ *noun* an infestation of the large intestine by a parasite *Balantidium coli*, which causes ulceration of the wall of the intestine, leading to diarrhoea and finally dysentery

**balanus** /'bælənəs/ *noun* the round end of the penis. ♀ **glans**

**bald** /bɔ:lɪd/ *adjective* with no hair, especially on the head

**baldness** /'bɔ:lɪdnəs/ *noun* the state of not having any hair

COMMENT: Baldness in men is hereditary; it can also occur in both men and women as a reaction to an illness or to a drug.

**Balkan frame** /,bɔ:lkan 'freɪm/, **Balkan beam** /,bɔ:lkan 'bi:m/ *noun* a frame fitted above a bed to which a leg in plaster can be attached. ♀ **Pearson bed**

**ball and cage valve** /,bɔ:l ən 'keɪdʒ vælv/ *noun* an artificial heart valve, formed of a silicon

ball which moves inside a metal cage to open and shut the valve

**ball and socket joint** /,bɔ:l ənd 'sɒkɪt dʒɔɪnt/ *noun* a joint where the round end of a long bone is attached to a cup-shaped hollow in another bone in such a way that the long bone can move in almost any direction. Compare **ginglymus**

**balloon** /bɔ:'lu:n/ *noun* a bag of light material inflated with air or a gas, used to unblock arteries

**balloon angioplasty** /bɔ:,lu:n ,ændʒɪə 'plæstɪ/ *noun* same as **percutaneous angioplasty**

**ballottement** /bɔ'lɒtmənt/ *noun* a method of examining the body by tapping or moving a part, especially during pregnancy

**balneotherapy** /,bælniəʊ'therəpi/ *noun* the treatment of diseases by bathing in hot water or water containing beneficial natural chemicals

**balsam** /'bɔ:ls(ə)m/ *noun* a mixture of resin and oil, used to rub on sore joints or to put in hot water and use as an inhalant. ♀ **friar's balsam**

**ban** /bæn/ *verb* to say that something is not permitted ○ *Smoking is banned throughout the building.* ○ *Use of this drug has been banned.*

**bandage** /'bændɪdʒ/ *noun* a piece of cloth which is wrapped around a wound or an injured limb ○ *His head was covered with bandages.* ■ *verb* to wrap a piece of cloth around a wound ○ *She bandaged his leg.* ○ *His arm is bandaged up.*

**Bandl's ring** /'bænd(ə)lz rɪŋ/ same as **retraction ring** [After Ludwig Bandl (1842–92), German obstetrician.]

**Bankart's operation** /'bæŋkɑ:ts ɒpə ,reɪf(ə)n/ *noun* an operation to repair a recurrent dislocation of the shoulder [First performed 1923. After Arthur Sydney Blundell Bankart (1879–1951), first orthopaedic surgeon at the Middlesex Hospital, London, UK]

**Banti's syndrome** /'bæntɪz ,sɪndrəʊm/, **Banti's disease** /'bæntɪz dɪ,zɪ:z/ *noun* same as **splenic anaemia** [Described 1882. After Guido Banti (1852–1925), Florentine pathologist and physician.]

**Barbados leg** /bɑ:beɪdɒs 'leg/ *noun* a form of elephantiasis, a large swelling of the leg due to a Filaria worm

**barber's itch** /,bɑ:bəz 'ɪtʃ/, **barber's rash** /,bɑ:bəz 'ræʃ/ *noun* same as **syccosis barbae**

**barbiturate** /bɑ:'bɪtjʊrət/ *noun* a sedative drug

**barbotage** /,bɑ:bə'tɑ:ʒ/ *noun* a method of spinal analgesia by which cerebrospinal fluid is withdrawn and then injected back

**barium** /'beəriəm/ *noun* a chemical element, forming poisonous compounds, used as a contrast medium when taking X-ray photographs of soft tissue (NOTE: The chemical symbol is **Ba**)

**barium enema** /,bɛəriəm 'ɛnɪmə/ *noun* a liquid solution containing barium sulphate which is put into the rectum to increase the contrast of an X-ray of the lower intestine

**barium meal** /,bɛəriəm 'mi:l/, **barium solution** /,bɛəriəm sə'lu:f(ə)n/ *noun* a liquid solution containing barium sulphate which someone drinks to increase the contrast of an X-ray of the alimentary tract

**Barlow's disease** /'bɑ:ləʊz dɪ,zɪz/ *noun* scurvy in children, caused by a lack of vitamin C [Described 1882. After Sir Thomas Barlow (1845–1945), physician at various London hospitals and to Queen Victoria, King Edward VII and King George V.]

**Barlow's sign** /'bɑ:ləʊz saɪn/ *noun* a test for congenital dislocation of the hip, in which a sudden movement is felt and sometimes a sound is heard when the joint is manipulated

**baroreceptor** /,bærəʊrɪ'septə/ *noun* one of a group of nerves near the carotid artery and aortic arch, which senses changes in blood pressure

**barotrauma** /,bærəʊ'trɔ:mə/ *noun* an injury caused by a sharp increase in pressure

**Barr body** /'bɑ: bɒdi/ *noun* a dense clump of chromatin found only in female cells, which can be used to identify the sex of a baby before birth [Described 1949. After Murray Llewellyn Barr (1908–95), head of the Department of Anatomy at the University of Western Ontario, Canada.]

**Barré-Guillain syndrome** /,bærɛi 'gi: jæn ,sɪndrəʊm/ *noun* ♦ **Guillain-Barré syndrome**

**barrel chest** /,bærəl 'tʃɛst/ *noun* a chest formed like a barrel, caused by asthma or emphysema

**barrier cream** /'bærɪə kri:m/ *noun* a cream put on the skin to prevent the skin coming into contact with irritating substances

**barrier nursing** /'bærɪə ,nɜ:sɪŋ/ *noun* the nursing of someone who has an infectious disease. It involves keeping them away from other patients and making sure that faeces and soiled bedclothes do not carry the infection to other patients.

**bartholinitis** /,bɑ:θəlɪ'nartɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the Bartholin's glands

**Bartholin's glands** /'bɑ:θəlɪnz glændz/ *plural noun* two glands at the side of the vagina and between it and the vulva, which secrete a lubricating substance. Also called **greater vestibular glands** [After Caspar Bartholin (1655–1748), Danish anatomist.]

**basal** /'beɪs(ə)l/ *adjective* located at the bottom of something, or forming its base

**basal metabolic rate** /,beɪsɪk metə'bɒlɪk reɪt/ *noun* the amount of energy used by the body in exchanging oxygen and carbon dioxide when at rest. It was formerly used as a way of testing thyroid gland activity. Abbreviation **BMR**

**base** /beɪs/ *noun* **1.** the bottom part ○ *the base of the spine* **2.** the main ingredient of an ointment, as opposed to the active ingredient **3.** a substance which reacts with an acid to form a salt ■ *verb* to use something as a base

**Basedow's disease** /'bæzɪdəʊz dɪ,zɪz/ *noun* a form of hyperthyroidism [Described 1840. After Carl Adolph Basedow (1799–1854), general practitioner in Mersburg, Germany.]

**basement membrane** /,beɪsmənt ,mem 'breɪn/ *noun* a membrane at the base of an epithelium

**basilar** /'bæzɪlə/ *adjective* referring to a base

**basilic vein** /bɑ:zɪlɪk 'veɪn/ *noun* a large vein running along the inside of the arm

**basophil** /'beɪsəfɪl/ *noun* a type of white blood cell which has granules in its cytoplasm and contains histamine and heparin

**basophilia** /,beɪsə'fɪliə/ *noun* an increase in the number of basophils in the blood

**basophilic granulocyte** /,beɪsəfɪlɪk 'grænjʊləsaɪt/ *noun* same as **basophil**

**Batten's disease** /'bæt(ə)nɪz dɪ,zɪz/ *noun* a hereditary disease which affects the enzymes of the brain, causing cells in the brain and eye to die

**battered baby syndrome** /'bætəd ,beɪbi ,sɪndrəʊm/, **battered child syndrome** /'bætəd 'tʃaɪld 'sɪndrəʊm/ *noun* a condition in which a baby or small child is frequently beaten, usually by one or both of its parents, sustaining injuries such as multiple fractures

**battledore placenta** /'bæt(ə)ldə: plə'sentə/ *noun* a placenta where the umbilical cord is attached at the edge and not at the centre

**Bazin's disease** /'beɪzɪnz dɪ,zɪz/ *noun* same as **erythema induratum** [Described 1861. After Pierre Antoine Ernest Bazin (1807–78), dermatologist at Hôpital St Louis, Paris, France. He was an expert in parasitology associated with skin conditions.]

**BC** *abbreviation* bone conduction

**BCC** *abbreviation* Breast Cancer Campaign

**B cell** /'bi: seɪ/ *noun* same as **beta cell**

**BCG** /,bi: si: 'dʒi: ,væksɪn/, **BCG vaccine** *noun* a vaccine which immunises against tuberculosis. Full form **bacille Calmette-Guérin**

**BCh** *abbreviation* Bachelor of Surgery

**BDA** *abbreviation* British Dental Association

**bearing down** /,beərɪŋ 'daʊn/ *noun* a stage in childbirth when the woman starts to push out the baby from the uterus

**bearing-down pain** /,beərɪŋ 'daʊn ,peɪn/ *noun* pain felt in the uterus during the second stage of labour (NOTE: Bearing-down pain is also associated with uterine prolapse.)

**Beck inventory of depression** /,bek ,ɪnvənt(ə)rɪ əv dɪ'preʃ(ə)n/ *noun* one of the rating scales for depression, in which a series of 21



questions refers to attitudes frequently shown by people suffering from depression

**beclomethasone** /ˈbɛkləˈmɛθəsəʊn/ *noun* a steroid drug usually used in an inhaler to treat asthma or hay fever

**becquerel** /ˈbɛkəreɪl/ *noun* an SI unit of measurement of radiation. Abbreviation **Bq** (NOTE: Now used in place of the **curie**.)

**bed bath** /ˈbɛd bɑːθ/ *noun* an act of washing the whole body of someone who is unable to get up to wash. Also called **blanket bath**

**bed blocking** /ˈbɛd ˌblɒkɪŋ/ *noun* the fact of people being kept in hospital because other forms of care are not available, which means that other people cannot be treated

**bedbug** /ˈbɛdbʌg/ *noun* a small insect which lives in dirty bedclothes and sucks blood

**bed occupancy** /ˈbɛd ˌɒkjʊpənsi/ *noun* the percentage of beds in a hospital which are occupied

**bedpan** /ˈbɛdpæn/ *noun* a dish into which someone can urinate or defecate without getting out of bed

**bed rest** /ˈbɛd rest/ *noun* a period of time spent in bed in order to rest and recover from an illness

**bedridden** /ˈbɛd,rɪd(ə)n/ *adjective* referring to someone who has been too ill to get out of bed over a long period of time

**bedside manner** /ˌbɛdsɑɪd ˈmænə/ *noun* the way in which a doctor behaves towards a patient, especially a patient who is in bed □ a **good bedside manner** the ability to make patients feel comforted and reassured

**bedsore** /ˈbɛdsɔː/ *noun* an inflamed patch of skin on a bony part of the body, which develops into an ulcer, caused by pressure of the part on the mattress after lying for some time in one position. Special beds such as air beds, ripple beds and water beds are used to try to prevent the formation of bedsores. Also called **pressure sore**, **decubitus ulcer**

**bedstate** /ˈbɛdstɛɪt/ *noun* a record of the current level of occupancy of beds in a hospital or care unit, updated as admissions and discharges occur

**bedwetting** /ˈbɛdwetɪŋ/ *noun* same as **nocturnal enuresis** (NOTE: This term is used mainly about children.)

**Beer's knife** /ˈbiːz naɪf/ *noun* a knife with a triangular blade, used in eye operations [After George Joseph Beer (1763–1821), German ophthalmologist.]

**behaviour** /bɪˈheɪvjə/ *noun* a way of acting ○ *His behaviour was very aggressive.*

**behavioural** /bɪˈheɪvjərəl/ *adjective* relating to behaviour

**behaviourism** /bɪˈheɪvjəriɪz(ə)m/ *noun* a psychological theory proposing that only someone's

behaviour should be studied to discover their psychological problems

**behaviourist** /bɪˈheɪvjərɪst/ *noun* a psychologist who follows behaviourism

**behaviour therapy** /bɪˌheɪvjə ˈθerəpi/ *noun* a form of psychiatric treatment in which someone learns how to improve their condition

**Behçet's syndrome** /ˈbeɪsɛts ˌsɪndrəʊm/ *noun* a chronic condition of the immune system with no known cause, experienced as a series of attacks of inflammation of small blood vessels accompanied by mouth ulcers and sometimes genital ulcers, skin lesions and inflamed eyes [Described 1937. After Halushi Behçet (1889–1948), Turkish dermatologist.]

**behind** /bɪˈhaɪnd/ *noun* same as **buttock** (*informal*)

**bejel** /ˈbɛdʒəl/ *noun* a non-venereal form of syphilis which is endemic among children in some areas of the Middle East and elsewhere and is caused by a spirochaete strain of bacteria

**belch** /bɛltʃ/ *noun* the action of allowing air in the stomach to come up through the mouth ■ *verb* to allow air in the stomach to come up through the mouth

**belching** /ˈbɛltʃɪŋ/ *noun* the action of allowing air in the stomach to come up through the mouth. Also called **eructation**

**belladonna** /ˌbɛləˈdɒnə/ *noun* 1. a poisonous plant with berries containing atropine. Also called **deadly nightshade** 2. a form of atropine extracted from the belladonna plant

**belle indifférence** /ˌbɛl ænˈdɪfərə:ns/ *noun* an excessively calm state in a person, in a situation which would usually produce a show of emotion

**Bellocq's cannula** /beˌlɒks ˈkænjʊlə/, **Bellocq's sound** /beˌlɒks ˈsaʊnd/ *noun* an instrument used to control a nosebleed [After Jean Jacques Bellocq (1732–1807), French surgeon.]

**Bell's mania** /ˌbɛlz ˈmeɪniə/ *noun* a form of acute mania with delirium [After Luther Vose Bell (1806–62), American physiologist.]

**Bell's palsy** /ˌbɛlz ˈpɔːlzi/ *noun* paralysis of the facial nerve on one side of the face, preventing one eye being closed. Also called **facial paralysis** [Described 1821. After Sir Charles Bell (1774–1842), Scottish surgeon. He ran anatomy schools, first in Edinburgh and then in London. Professor of Anatomy at the Royal Academy.]

**belly** /ˈbɛli/ *noun* 1. same as **abdomen** 2. the fatter central part of a muscle

**Bence Jones protein** /ˌbɛns ˈdʒəʊnz ˌprəʊti:n/ *noun* a protein found in the urine of people who have myelomatosis, lymphoma, leukaemia and some other cancers [Described 1848. After Henry Bence Jones (1814–73), physician at St George's Hospital, London, UK]

**bends** /bendz/ *plural noun* □ **the bends** † **caisson disease**

**Benedict's solution** /'benɪdɪkts sə,lʊ:f(ə)n/ *noun* a solution used to carry out Benedict's test

**Benedict's test** /'benɪdɪkts test/ *noun* a test to see if sugar is present in the urine [Described 1915. After Stanley Rossiter Benedict (1884–1936), physiological chemist at Cornell University, New York, USA.]

**benign** /bə'nain/ *adjective* generally harmless

**benign growth** /bə'nain grəʊθ/ *noun* same as **benign tumour**

**benign pancreatic disease** /bə'nain ,pæŋkri'ætɪk dɪ,zɪ:z/ *noun* chronic pancreatitis

**benign prostatic hypertrophy** /bɪ'nain prɒ ,stætɪk haɪ'pɜ:trəfi/ *noun* a nonmalignant enlargement of the prostate. Abbreviation **BPH**

**benign tumour** /bə'nain 'tju:mə/ *noun* a tumour which will not grow again or spread to other parts of the body if it is removed surgically, but which can be fatal if not treated. Also called **benign growth**. Opposite **malignant tumour**

**Bennett's fracture** /,benɪts 'fræktʃə/ *noun* a fracture of the first metacarpal, the bone between the thumb and the wrist [Described 1886. After Edward Halloran Bennett (1837–1907), Irish anatomist, later Professor of Surgery at Trinity College, Dublin, Ireland.]

**benzocaine** /'benzəkɛɪn/ *noun* a drug with anaesthetic properties used in some throat lozenges and skin creams

**benzodiazepine** /,benzədaɪ'æzəpi:n/ *noun* a drug which acts on receptors in the central nervous system to relieve symptoms of anxiety and insomnia, although prolonged use is to be avoided (NOTE: Benzodiazepines have names ending in **-azepam**: **diazepam**.)

**benzoin** /'benzəɔɪn/ *noun* a resin used to make friar's balsam

**benzyl benzoate** /,benzɪl 'benzəʊɪt/ *noun* a colourless oily liquid which occurs naturally in balsams, used in medicines and perfumes

**bereavement** /bɪ'ri:vmənt/ *noun* the loss of someone, especially a close relative or friend, through death

**beriberi** /,beri'beri/ *noun* a disease of the nervous system caused by lack of vitamin B<sub>1</sub>

**berylliosis** /bə,rɪli'əʊsɪs/ *noun* poisoning caused by breathing in particles of the poisonous chemical compound beryllium oxide

**Besnier's prurigo** /,beniɛz prʊ'raɪgəʊ/ *noun* an itchy skin rash on the backs of the knees and the insides of the elbows [After Ernest Besnier (1831–1909), French dermatologist.]

**beta** /'bi:tə/ *noun* the second letter of the Greek alphabet

**beta-adrenergic receptor** /,bi:tə ,ædrə 'nɜ:dʒɪk/ *noun* one of two types of nerve endings

that respond to adrenaline by speeding up the heart rate or dilating the bronchi

**beta blocker** /'bi:tə ,blɒkə/ *noun* a drug which reduces the activity of the heart (NOTE: Beta blockers have names ending in **-olol**: **atenolol**, **propranolol hydrochloride**.)

**beta cell** /'bi:tə sel/ *noun* a type of cell found in the islets of Langerhans, in the pancreas, which produces insulin. Also called **B cell**

**Betadine** /'bi:tədi:n/ *noun* a trade name for a form of iodine

**betamethasone** /,bi:tə'meθəsəʊn/ *noun* a very strong corticosteroid drug

**betaxolol** /bɪ'tæksələʊl/ *noun* a beta blocker drug used in the treatment of high blood pressure and glaucoma

**bethanechol** /be'θænikəl/ *noun* an agonist drug used to increase muscle tone after surgery

**Betnovate** /'betnəʊveɪt/ *noun* a trade name for an ointment containing betamethasone

**bi-** /baɪ/ *prefix* two or twice

**bias** /'baɪəs/ *noun* a systematic error in the design or conduct of a study which could explain the results

**bicarbonate of soda** /baɪ,kɑ:bənət əv 'səʊdə/ *noun* same as **sodium bicarbonate**

**bicellular** /baɪ'seljələ/ *adjective* having two cells

**biceps** /'baɪseps/ *noun* any muscle formed of two parts joined to form one tendon, especially the muscles in the front of the upper arm (**biceps brachii**) and the back of the thigh (**biceps femoris**). † **triceps** (NOTE: The plural is **biceps**.)

**bicipital** /baɪ'sɪpɪt(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to a biceps muscle

**biconcave** /baɪ'kɒŋkɛɪv/ *adjective* referring to a lens which is concave on both sides

**biconvex** /baɪ'kɒnveks/ *adjective* referring to a lens which is convex on both sides

**bicornuate** /baɪ'kɔ:njuət/ *adjective* divided into two parts (NOTE: The word is sometimes applied to a malformation of the uterus.)

**bicuspid** /baɪ'kʌspɪd/ *adjective* with two points ■ *noun* a premolar tooth

**bicuspid valve** /,baɪ'kʌspɪd ,vælv/ *noun* same as **mitral valve**. See illustration at **HEART** in Supplement

**b.i.d.** *adverb* (used on prescriptions) twice daily. Full form **bis in die**

**bidet** /'bi:deɪ/ *noun* an object for washing the genital and anal areas. It looks like a low toilet.

**bifid** /'baɪfɪd/ *adjective* in two parts

**bifocal** /baɪ'fəʊk(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to lenses made with two sections which have different focal lengths, one for looking at things which are near, the other for looking at things which are far away

**bifocal glasses** /baɪˈfəʊk(ə)l ˈglɑːsɪz/, **bifocal lenses** /baɪˈfəʊk(ə)l ˈlɛnzɪz/, **bifocals** /baɪˈfəʊk(ə)lz/ *plural noun* spectacles with lenses which have two types of lens combined in the same piece of glass, the top part being used for seeing at a distance and the lower part for reading

**bifurcate** *adjective* /baɪˈfɜːkeɪt/ separating or branching off into two parts ■ *verb* /ˈbaɪfəkeɪt/ to split or branch off into two parts

**bifurcation** /ˌbaɪfəˈkeɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a place where something divides into two parts

**bigeminy** /baɪˈdʒemɪni/ *noun* same as **pulsus bigeminus**

**big toe** /ˌbɪɡ ˈtəʊ/ *noun* the largest of the five toes, on the inside of the foot. Also called **great toe**

**biguanide** /baɪˈɡwɑːnaɪd/ *noun* a drug which lowers blood sugar, used in the treatment of Type II diabetes

**bilateral** /baɪˈlæt(ə)rəl/ *adjective* affecting both sides

**bilateral pneumonia** /baɪˌlæt(ə)rəl ˈnjuːˈmɔːniə/ *noun* pneumonia affecting both lungs

**bile** /baɪl/ *noun* a thick bitter brownish yellow fluid produced by the liver, stored in the gall bladder and used to digest fatty substances and neutralise acids (NOTE: For other terms referring to bile, see words beginning with **chol-**.)

**bilharzia** /bɪlˈhɑːtɪsɪə/ *noun* 1. a fluke which enters the bloodstream and causes bilharziasis. Also called **Schistosoma** 2. same as **bilharziasis** (NOTE: Although strictly speaking, **bilharzia** is the name of the fluke, it is also generally used for the name of the disease: *bilharzia patients; six cases of bilharzia.*)

**bilharziasis** /bɪlˈhɑːtɪsɑːsɪs/ *noun* a tropical disease caused by flukes in the intestine or bladder. Also called **bilharzia**, **schistosomiasis**

**bili-** /bɪli/ *prefix* referring to bile (NOTE: For other terms referring to bile, see words beginning with **chol-**, **chole-**.)

**biliary** /ˈbɪliəri/ *adjective* referring to bile

**biliary colic** /ˌbɪliəri ˈkɒlɪk/ *noun* pain in the abdomen caused by gallstones in the bile duct or by inflammation of the gall bladder

**bilious** /ˈbɪliəs/ *adjective* 1. referring to bile 2. referring to nausea (*informal*)

**biliousness** /ˈbɪliəsənəs/ *noun* a feeling of indigestion and nausea (*informal*)

**bilirubin** /ˌbɪlɪˈruːbɪn/ *noun* a red pigment in bile

**bilirubinaemia** /ˌbɪlɪruːbɪˈniːmiə/ *noun* an excess of bilirubin in the blood

**biluria** /ˌbɪlɪˈjʊəriə/ *noun* the presence of bile in the urine. Also called **choluria**

**biliverdin** /ˌbɪlɪˈvɜːdɪn/ *noun* a green pigment in bile, produced by oxidation of bilirubin

**Billings method** /ˈbɪlɪŋz ˌmeθəd/ *noun* a method of birth control which uses the colour and consistency of the cervical mucus as guides to whether ovulation is taking place

**Billroth's operations** /ˈbɪlrɒθs ɒpəˈreɪʃ(ə)nz/ *plural noun* surgical operations in which the lower part of the stomach is removed and the part which is left is linked to the duodenum (**Billroth I**) or jejunum (**Billroth II**) [Described 1881. After Christian Albert Theodore Billroth (1829–94), Prussian surgeon.]

**bimanual** /baɪˈmænjʊəl/ *adjective* done with two hands, or needing both hands to be done

**binary** /ˈbaɪnəri/ *adjective* made of two parts

**binary fission** /ˌbaɪnəri ˈfɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the process of splitting into two parts in some types of cell division

**binational** /baɪnˈɔːrəl/ *adjective* using, or relating to, both ears

**binder** /ˈbaɪndə/ *noun* a bandage which is wrapped round a limb to support it

**Binet's test** /ˈbɪneɪz test/ *noun* an intelligence test for children [Originally described 1905 but later modified at Stanford University, California, USA. After Alfred Binet (1857–1911), French psychologist and physiologist.]

**binocular** /bɪˈnɒkjʊlə/ *adjective* referring to the two eyes

**binovular** /bɪˈnɒvjʊlə/ *adjective* referring to twins who develop from two different ova

**bio-** /baɪəʊ/ *prefix* referring to living organisms

**bioassay** /ˌbaɪəʊəˈseɪ/ *noun* a test of the strength of a drug, hormone, vitamin or serum, by examining the effect it has on living animals or tissue

**bioavailability** /ˌbaɪəʊəvəɪləˈbɪlɪti/ *noun* the extent to which a nutrient or medicine can be taken up by the body

**biochemistry** /ˌbaɪəʊˈkɛmɪstri/ *noun* the chemistry of living tissues

**biocide** /ˈbaɪəʊsaɪd/ *noun* a substance which kills living organisms

**biodegradable** /ˌbaɪəʊdɪˈɡreɪdəb(ə)l/ *adjective* easily decomposed by organisms such as bacteria or by the effect of sunlight, the sea, etc.

**biofeedback** /ˌbaɪəʊˈfiːdbæk/ *noun* the control of the autonomic nervous system by someone's conscious thought, as he or she sees the results of tests or scans

**biohazard** /ˈbaɪəʊˌhæzəd/ *noun* a danger to human beings or their environment, especially one from a poisonous or infectious agent

**biological** /ˌbaɪəˈlɒdʒɪk(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to biology

**biological parent** /ˌbaɪəˌlɒdʒɪk(ə)l ˈpeərənt/ *noun* a parent who was physically involved in producing a child

**biologist** /baɪ'blɒdʒɪst/ *noun* a scientist who specialises in biology

**biology** /baɪ'blɒdʒi/ *noun* the study of living organisms

**biomaterial** /,baɪəʊmə'tɪəriəl/ *noun* a synthetic material which can be used as an implant in living tissue

**biometry** /baɪ'ɒmətri/ *noun* the science which applies statistics to the study of living things □

**biometry of a fetus** the measurement of the key parameters of growth of a fetus by ultrasound

**bionic ear** /baɪ,ɒnɪk 'iə/ *noun* a cochlear implant (*informal*)

**bionics** /baɪ'ɒnɪks/ *noun* the process of applying knowledge of biological systems to mechanical and electronic devices

**biophysical profile** /,baɪəʊfɪzɪk(ə)l 'prəʊfaɪl/ *noun* a profile of a fetus, based on such things as its breathing movement and body movement

**biopsy** /'baɪɒpsi/ *noun* the process of taking a small piece of living tissue for examination and diagnosis ○ *The biopsy of the tissue from the growth showed that it was benign.*

**biorhythm** /'baɪəʊrɪð(ə)m/ *noun* a regular process of change which takes place within living organisms, e.g. sleeping, waking or the reproductive cycle (NOTE: Some people believe that biorhythms affect behaviour and mood.)

**biostatistics** /,baɪəʊstə'tɪstɪks/ *plural noun* statistics used in medicine and the study of disease

**biotechnology** /,baɪəʊtekn'ɒlədʒi/ *noun* 1. the use of biological processes in industrial production, e.g. in the production of drugs 2. same as **genetic modification**

**biotin** /'baɪətɪn/ *noun* a type of vitamin B found in egg yolks, liver and yeast

**BIPAP** /'baɪræp/ *noun* a breathing apparatus that allows air delivered through a mask to be set at one pressure for inhaling and another for exhaling, maximising breathing efficiency and minimising natural muscular effort. Full form **bi-level positive airway pressure**

**biparietal** /,baɪrə'raɪət(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to the two parietal bones

**biparous** /'bɪpərəs/ *adjective* producing twins

**bipennate** /baɪ'penɪt/ *adjective* referring to a muscle with fibres which rise from either side of the tendon

**bipolar** /baɪ'pəʊlə/ *adjective* with two poles. See illustration at **NEURONE** in Supplement

**bipolar disorder** /,baɪpəʊlə dɪs'ɔ:də/ *noun* a psychological condition in which someone moves between mania and depression and experiences delusion. Also called **manic-depressive illness**, **manic depression**

**bipolar neurone** /baɪ,ɪpəʊlə 'nɪjʊərəʊn/ *noun* a nerve cell with two processes, a dendrite and an axon, found in the retina. See illustration at **NEURONE** in Supplement. Compare **multipolar neurone**, **unipolar neurone**

**birth** /bɜ:θ/ *noun* the act of being born

**birth canal** /'bɜ:θ kə,næl/ *noun* the uterus, vagina and vulva

**birth control** /'bɜ:θ kən,trəʊl/ *noun* same as **contraception**

**birth control pill** /'bɜ:θ kən,trəʊl pɪl/ *noun* same as **oral contraceptive**

**birthing chair** /'bɜ:θɪŋ tʃeə/ *noun* a special chair in which a woman sits to give birth

**birthing pool** /'bɜ:θɪŋ pu:l/ *noun* a special large bath in which pregnant women can relax before and when giving birth

**birthmark** /'bɜ:θmɑ:k/ *noun* an unusual coloured or raised area on the skin which someone has from birth. Also called **naevus**

**birth mother** /'bɜ:θ ,mʌðə/ *noun* the woman who gave birth to a child

**birth parent** /'bɜ:θ ,pɛərənt/ *noun* one of the parents that physically produced a child

**birth plan** /'bɜ:θ plæn/ *noun* a list of a pregnant woman's wishes about how the birth of her baby should take place, e.g. whether she wants a natural birth and what pain relief she should be given

**birth rate** /'bɜ:θ reɪt/ *noun* the number of births per year, shown per thousand of the population ○ *a birth rate of 15 per thousand* ○ *There has been a severe decline in the birth rate.*

**birth trauma** /'bɜ:θ ,trɔ:mə/ *noun* an injury caused to a baby during delivery

**birth weight** /'bɜ:θ weɪt/ *noun* the weight of a baby at birth

**bisacodyl** /,baɪsək'ɒdɪl/ *noun* a laxative drug

**bisexual** /baɪ'sekʃuəl/ *adjective* referring to a person who is sexually attracted to both males and females

**bisexuality** /,baɪsekʃu'ælɪti/ *noun* the state of being sexually attracted to both males and females

**bis in die** /,bɪs ɪn 'di:ɪ/ *adverb* full form of **b.i.d.**

**bismuth** /'bɪzməθ/ *noun* a chemical element (NOTE: The chemical symbol is **Bi**.)

**bistoury** /'bɪstəri/ *noun* a sharp thin surgical knife

**bite** /baɪt/ *verb* 1. to cut into something with the teeth ○ *He bit a piece out of the apple.* 2. (of an insect) to puncture someone's skin ■ *noun* 1. the action of biting or of being bitten 2. a place or mark where someone has been bitten ○ *a dog bite* ○ *an insect bite*

**bite wing** /'baɪt wɪŋ/ *noun* a holder for dental X-ray film, which a person clenches between the

teeth, so allowing an X-ray of both upper and lower teeth to be taken

**Bitot's spots** /,bi:təʊz 'spɒts/ *plural noun* small white spots on the conjunctiva, caused by vitamin A deficiency [Described 1863. After Pierre A. Bitot (1822–88), French physician.]

**bivalve** /'bɪvæl/ *noun* an organ which has two valves ■ *adjective* referring to a bivalve organ

**black eye** /,blæk 'aɪ/ *noun* bruising and swelling of the tissues round an eye, usually caused by a blow

**blackhead** /'blækhed/ *noun* same as **comedo** (*informal*)

**black heel** /'blæk ,hi:l/ *noun* a haemorrhage inside the heel, characterised by black spots

**black out** /'blæk aʊt/ *verb* to have sudden loss of consciousness ○ *I suddenly blacked out and I can't remember anything more*

**blackout** /'blækaʊt/ *noun* a sudden loss of consciousness (*informal*) ○ *She must have had a blackout while driving*. Also called **fainting fit**

**blackwater fever** /'blækwɔ:tə ,fi:vəl/ *noun* a form of malaria where haemoglobin from red blood cells is released into plasma and makes the urine dark

**bladder** /'blædə/ *noun* any sac in the body, especially the sac where the urine collects before being passed out of the body ○ *He is suffering from bladder trouble*. ○ *She is taking antibiotics for a bladder infection*.

**Ballock's operation** /'bleɪlɒks ɒpə'reɪʃ(ə)n/, **Ballock-Taussig operation** /,bleɪlɒk 'tɔ:siŋ ɒpə'reɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a surgical operation to connect the pulmonary artery to the subclavian artery, in order to increase blood flow to the lungs of someone who has tetralogy of Fallot

**bland** /blænd/ *adjective* referring to food which is not spicy, irritating or acid

**blanket bath** /'blæŋkɪt bɑ:θ/ *noun* same as **bed bath**

**blast** /blɑ:st/ *noun* **1.** a wave of air pressure from an explosion which can cause concussion **2.** an immature form of a cell before distinctive characteristics develop

**-blast** /blæst/ *suffix* referring to a very early stage in the development of a cell

**blasto-** /blæstəʊ/ *prefix* referring to a germ cell **blastocoele** /'blæstəʊsi:l/ *noun* a cavity filled with fluid in a morula

**blastocyst** /'blæstəʊsɪst/ *noun* an early stage in the development of an embryo

**Blastomyces** /,blæstəʊ'maɪsɪ:z/ *noun* a type of parasitic fungus which affects the skin

**blastomycosis** /,blæstəʊmaɪ'kəʊsɪs/ *noun* an infection caused by *Blastomyces*

**blastula** /'blæstjʊlə/ *noun* the first stage of the development of an embryo in animals

**bleb** /bleb/ *noun* a blister. Compare **bull**

**bleeder** /'bli:də/ *noun* **1.** a blood vessel which bleeds during surgery **2.** a person who has haemophilia (*informal*)

**bleeding** /'bli:dɪŋ/ *noun* an unusual loss of blood from the body through the skin, through an orifice or internally

**bleeding time** /'bli:dɪŋ taɪm/ *noun* a test of the clotting ability of someone's blood, by timing the length of time it takes for the blood to congeal

**blennorrhagia** /,blenəʊ'reɪdʒə/ *noun* the discharge of mucus

**blennorrhoea** /,blenə'ri:ə/ *noun* the discharge of watery mucus

**bleomycin** /,bli:əʊ'maɪsɪn/ *noun* an antibiotic used to treat forms of cancer such as Hodgkin's disease

**blephar-** /blefə/ *prefix* same as **blepharo-** (*used before vowels*)

**blepharitis** /,blefə'raɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the eyelid

**blepharo-** /blefərəʊ/ *prefix* referring to the eyelid

**blepharoconjunctivitis** /,blefərəʊkən ,dʒʌŋktɪ'vaɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the conjunctiva of the eyelids

**blepharon** /'blefərən/ *noun* an eyelid

**blepharospasm** /'blefərəʊspæz(ə)m/ *noun* a sudden contraction of the eyelid, as when a tiny piece of dust gets in the eye

**blepharotosis** /,blefərəʊ'təʊsɪs/ *noun* a condition in which the upper eyelid is half closed because of paralysis of the muscle or nerve

**blind** /blaɪnd/ *adjective* not able to see

**blind loop syndrome** /,blaɪnd 'lu:p ,sɪndrəʊm/ *noun* a condition which occurs in cases of diverticulosis or of Crohn's disease, with steatorrhoea, abdominal pain and megaloblastic anaemia

**blindness** /'blaɪndnəs/ *noun* the fact of not being able to see

**blind spot** /'blaɪnd spɒt/ *noun* the point in the retina where the optic nerve joins it, which does not register light

**blind study** /,blaɪnd 'stʌdi/ *noun* an investigation to test an intervention such as giving a drug, in which a person does not know if he or she has taken the active medicine or the placebo

**blister** /'blɪstəl/ *noun* a swelling on the skin containing serum from the blood, caused by rubbing, burning or a disease such as chickenpox ■ *verb* to produce blisters

**bloated** /'bləʊtɪd/ *adjective* experiencing the uncomfortable sensation of a very full stomach

**block** /blɒk/ *noun* **1.** the stopping of a function **2.** a large piece of something ○ *A block of wood fell on his foot*. **3.** a period of time ○ *The training is in two three-hour blocks*. ■ *verb* to fill the space in something and stop other things passing

through it ○ *The artery was blocked by a clot.* ○ *He swallowed a piece of plastic which blocked his oesophagus.*

**blocking** /'blɒkɪŋ/ *noun* a psychiatric disorder, in which someone suddenly stops one train of thought and switches to another

**blood** /blʌd/ *noun* a red liquid moved around the body by the pumping action of the heart (NOTE: For other terms referring to blood, see words beginning with **haem-**, **haemo-**, **haemato-**)

**blood bank** /'blʌd bæŋk/ *noun* a section of a hospital or a special centre where blood given by donors is stored for use in transfusions

**blood blister** /'blʌd ,blɪstə/ *noun* a swelling on the skin with blood inside, caused by nipping the flesh

**blood-borne virus** /,blʌd bɔ:n 'vaɪrəs/ *noun* a virus carried by the blood

**blood-brain barrier** /,blʌd breɪn 'bæriə/ *noun* the process by which some substances, which in other parts of the body will diffuse from capillaries, are held back by the endothelium of cerebral capillaries, preventing them from coming into contact with the fluids round the brain

**blood clot** /'blʌd klɒt/ *noun* a soft mass of coagulated blood in a vein or an artery. Also called **thrombus**

**blood count** /'blʌd kaʊnt/ *noun* a test to count the number and types of different blood cells in a sample of blood, in order to give an indication of the condition of the person's blood as a whole

**blood donor** /'blʌd ,dɒnə/ *noun* a person who gives blood which is then used in transfusions to other people

**blood dyscrasia** /,blʌd dɪs'kreɪziə/ *noun* any unusual blood condition such as a low cell count or platelet count

**blood gas** /'blʌd gæs/ *noun* oxygen and carbon dioxide that are naturally present in blood, an imbalance of which may indicate a respiratory disorder

**blood-glucose level** /,blʌd 'glu:kəʊz ,lev(ə)l/ *noun* the amount of glucose present in the blood. The usual blood-glucose level is about 60–100 mg of glucose per 100 ml of blood.

**blood group** /'blʌd gru:p/ *noun* one of the different groups into which human blood is classified. Also called **blood type**

COMMENT: Blood is classified in various ways. The most common classifications are by the agglutinogens (factors A and B) in red blood cells and by the Rhesus factor. Blood can therefore have either factor (Group A and Group B) or both factors (Group AB) or neither (Group O) and each of these groups can be Rhesus negative or positive.

**blood grouping** /'blʌd ,gru:pɪŋ/ *noun* the process of classifying people according to their blood groups

**blood-letting** /'blʌd ,letɪŋ/ *noun* same as **phlebotomy**

**blood loss** /'blʌd lɒs/ *noun* loss of blood from the body by bleeding

**blood pigment** /'blʌd ,pɪgmənt/ *noun* same as **haemoglobin**

**blood pressure** /'blʌd ,preʃə/ *noun* the pressure, measured in millimetres of mercury, at which the blood is pumped round the body by the heart

**blood relationship** /,blʌd rɪ'leɪʃ(ə)nʃɪp/ *noun* a relationship between people who come from the same family and have the same parents, grandparents or ancestors, as opposed to a relationship by marriage

**blood sample** /'blʌd ,sɑ:mpl̩/ *noun* a sample of blood, taken for testing

**bloodshot** /'blʌdʃɒt/ *adjective* referring to an eye with small specks of blood in it from a small damaged blood vessel

**blood sugar** /,blʌd 'fju:ɡə/ *noun* glucose present in the blood

**blood sugar level** /,blʌd 'fju:ɡə ,lev(ə)l/ *noun* the amount of glucose in the blood, which is higher after meals and in people with diabetes

**blood test** /'blʌd test/ *noun* a laboratory test of a blood sample to analyse its chemical composition ○ *The patient will have to have a blood test.*

**blood transfusion** /'blʌd træns,fju:ʒ(ə)n/ *noun* a procedure in which blood given by another person or taken from the patient at an earlier stage is transferred into the patient's vein

**blood type** /'blʌd taɪp/ *noun* same as **blood group**

**blood typing** /'blʌd ,taɪpɪŋ/ *noun* the analysis of blood for transfusion factors and blood group

**blood vessel** /'blʌd ,ves(ə)l/ *noun* any tube which carries blood round the body, e.g. an artery, vein or capillary (NOTE: For other terms referring to blood vessels, see words beginning with **angi-**, **angio-**)

**blood volume** /'blʌd ,vɒlju:m/ *noun* the total amount of blood in the body

**blot test** /'blɒt test/ *noun* ▶ **Rorschach test**

**blue baby** /,blu: 'beɪbi/ *noun* a baby who has congenital cyanosis, born either with a congenital heart condition or with a collapsed lung, which prevents an adequate supply of oxygen reaching the tissues, giving the baby's skin a slight blue colour (*informal*)

**blue litmus** /,blu: 'lɪtməs/ *noun* treated paper which indicates the presence of acid by turning red

**blurred vision** /,blɜ:d 'vɪʒ(ə)n/ *noun* a condition in which someone does not see objects clearly

**blush** /blʌʃ/ *noun* a rush of red colour to the skin of the face, caused by emotion ■ *verb* to go red in the face because of emotion

**BM** *abbreviation* Bachelor of Medicine

**BMA** *abbreviation* British Medical Association

**BMI** *abbreviation* body mass index

**BMR** *abbreviation* basal metabolic rate

**BNF** *abbreviation* British National Formulary

**body fluid** /'bɒdi ˌfluːɪd/ *noun* a liquid in the body, e.g. water, blood or semen

**body image** /,bɒdi ˈɪmɪdʒ/ *noun* the mental image which a person has of their own body. Also called **body schema**

**body language** /'bɒdi ˌlæŋɡwɪdʒ/ *noun* the expression on your face, or the way you hold your body, interpreted by other people as unconsciously revealing your feelings

**body odour** /,bɒdi ˈəʊdə/ *noun* an unpleasant smell caused by perspiration

**body scan** /'bɒdi skæn/ *noun* an examination of the whole of the body using ultrasound or other scanning techniques

**body schema** /,bɒdi ˈski:mə/ *noun* same as **body image**

**body substance isolation** /'bɒdi ˌsʌbstəns aɪsəˌleɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* making sure that a trauma victim is kept isolated from the possibility of infection from moist body substances

**body temperature** /'bɒdi ˌtɛmpərɪtʃə/ *noun* the internal temperature of the human body, usually about 37°C

**Boeck's disease** /'beks dɪˌziːz/, **Boeck's sarcoid** /'beks ˌsɑ:kɔɪd/ *noun* same as **sarcoidosis** [Described 1899. After Caesar Peter Moeller Boeck (1845–1913), Professor of Dermatology at Oslo, Norway.]

**Bohn's nodules** /,bɔ:nz ˈnɒdju:lz/, **Bohn's epithelial pearls** /,bɔ:nz epɪˌθi:lɪəl ˈpɜ:lz/ *plural noun* tiny cysts found in the mouths of healthy infants

**boil** /bɔɪl/ *noun* a tender raised mass of infected tissue and skin, usually caused by infection of a hair follicle by the bacterium *Staphylococcus aureus*. Also called **furuncle**

**bolus** /'bɒləs/ *noun* **1.** a mass of food which has been chewed and is ready to be swallowed **2.** a mass of food passing along the intestine

**bonding** /'bɒndɪŋ/ *noun* the process by which a psychological link is formed between a baby and its mother ○ *In autistic children bonding is difficult.*

**bone** /bəʊn/ *noun* **1.** calcified connective tissue **2.** one of the calcified pieces of connective tissue which make the skeleton ○ *There are several small bones in the human ear.* See illustration at **SYNOVIAL JOINT** in Supplement

**bone-anchored hearing aid** /,bəʊn ˌæŋkəd ˈhɪərɪŋ eɪd/ *noun* a hearing aid that is fitted sur-

gically into the skull, usually behind the ear. Abbreviation **BAHA**

**bone marrow** /'bəʊn ˌmærəʊ/ *noun* soft tissue in cancellous bone (NOTE: For other terms referring to bone marrow, see words beginning with **myel-**, **myelo-**.)

**bone marrow transplant** /,bəʊn ˌmærəʊ ˌtrænsplɑ:nt/ *noun* the transplant of marrow from a donor to a recipient

**bone scan** /'bəʊn skæn/ *noun* a scan which tracks a radioactive substance injected into the body to find areas where a bone is breaking down or repairing itself

**Bonney's blue** /,bɒnɪz ˈblu:/ *noun* a blue dye used as a disinfectant [After William Francis Victor Bonney (1872–1953), British gynaecologist.]

**bony** /'bəʊni/ *adjective* relating to bones, or made of bone

**bony labyrinth** /,bəʊni ˌlæbərɪnθ/ *noun* a hard part of the temporal bone surrounding the membranous labyrinth in the inner ear. Also called **osseous labyrinth**

**boob** /bu:b/ *noun* a woman's breast (*informal*)

**booster** /'bu:stə ɪnˌdʒekʃ(ə)n/, **booster injection** *noun* a repeat injection of vaccine given some time after the first injection to maintain the immunising effect

**boracic acid** /bɔ:ræsɪk ˈæsɪd/ *noun* a soluble white powder used as a general disinfectant. Also called **boric acid**

**borax** /'bɔ:ræks/ *noun* a white powder used as a household cleaner and disinfectant

**borborygmus** /,bɔ:bɔ'ɪgməs/ *noun* a rumbling noise in the abdomen, caused by gas in the intestine (NOTE: The plural is **borborygmi**.)

**borderline** /'bɔ:dəlaɪn/ *adjective* **1.** not clearly belonging to either one of two categories ○ *a borderline case* **2.** referring to a medical condition likely to develop in someone unless an effort is made to prevent it **3.** characterised by emotional instability and self-destructive behaviour ○ *a borderline personality*

**Bordetella** /,bɔ:də'telə/ *noun* a bacterium of the family *Brucellaceae* (NOTE: *Bordetella pertussis* causes whooping cough.)

**boric acid** /,bɔ:ɪrɪk ˈæsɪd/ *noun* same as **boracic acid**

**boron** /'bɔ:ɪrɒn/ *noun* a chemical element which is present in borax, and essential for healthy plant growth (NOTE: The chemical symbol is **B**.)

**bosom** /'bʊz(ə)m/ *noun* a woman's chest or breasts

**bottom** /'bɒtəm/ *noun* **1.** the part of the body on which you sit. ♀ **buttock** **2.** the anus (*informal*)

**bottom shuffling** /'bɒtəm ˌʃʌf(ə)ɪŋ/ *noun* the process by which a baby who cannot yet walk moves around by moving itself along on its hands and buttocks

**botulinum toxin** /ˌbɒtjʊˈlaɪnəm ˌtɒksɪn/ *noun* a poison produced by the bacterium *Clostridium botulinum* and used, in small doses, to treat muscular cramps and spasms

**botulism** /ˈbɒtjʊlɪz(ə)m/ *noun* a type of food poisoning, often fatal, caused by a toxin of *Clostridium botulinum* in badly canned or preserved food. Symptoms include paralysis of the muscles, vomiting and hallucinations.

**bougie** /ˈbuːʒiː/ *noun* a thin tube which can be inserted into passages in the body such as the oesophagus or rectum, either to allow liquid to be introduced or to dilate the passage

**bovine spongiform encephalopathy** /ˌbəʊvaɪn ˌspɒndʒɪfɔːm enˌkefəˈlɒpəθi/ *noun* a fatal brain disease of cattle. Abbreviation **BSE**. ⚭ **Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease**. Also called **mad cow disease**

**bowel** /ˈbəʊəl/ *noun* the intestine, especially the large intestine (NOTE: **Bowel** is often used in the plural in everyday language.)

**bowel movement** /ˈbəʊəl ˌmuːvmənt/ *noun* 1. an act of passing faeces out of the body through the anus ○ *The patient had a bowel movement this morning.* Also called **motion**. ⚭ **defecation** 2. the amount of faeces passed through the anus

**bowels** /ˈbəʊəlz/ *plural noun* same as **bowel**

**Bowen's disease** /ˈbəʊɪnz dɪˌzɪz/ *noun* a form of carcinoma, appearing as red plaques on the skin

**bow legs** /ˌbəʊ ˈlegz/ *noun* a state where the ankles touch and the knees are apart when a person is standing straight. Also called **genu varum**

**Bowman's capsule** /ˌbəʊmənz ˈkæpsjuːl/ *noun* the expanded end of a renal tubule, surrounding a glomerular tuft in the kidney, which filters plasma in order to reabsorb useful foodstuffs and eliminate waste. Also called **Malpighian glomerulus**, **glomerular capsule** [Described 1842. After Sir William Paget Bowman (1816–92), surgeon in Birmingham and later in London, who was a pioneer in work on the kidney and in ophthalmology.]

**BP** *abbreviation* 1. blood pressure 2. British Pharmacopoeia

**BPH** *abbreviation* benign prostatic hypertrophy

**Bq** *symbol* becquerel

**brace** /breɪs/ *noun* any type of splint or appliance worn for support, e.g. a metal support used on children's legs to make the bones straight or on teeth which are forming badly ○ *She wore a brace on her front teeth.*

**brachi-** /breɪki/ *prefix* same as **brachio-** (used before vowels)

**brachial** /ˈbreɪkiəl/ *adjective* referring to the arm, especially the upper arm

**brachialis muscle** /ˌbreɪkiˈeɪlɪs ˌmʌs(ə)/ *noun* a muscle that causes the elbow to bend

**brachio-** /breɪkiəʊ/ *prefix* referring to the arm

**brachiocephalic artery** /ˌbreɪkiəʊsəˌfæɪk ˈɑːtəri/ *noun* the largest branch of the arch of the aorta, which continues as the right common carotid and right subclavian arteries

**brachiocephalic vein** /ˌbreɪkiəʊsəˌfæɪk ˈveɪn/ *noun* one of a pair of large veins on opposite sides of the neck that join to form the superior vena cava. Also called **innominate vein**

**brachium** /ˈbreɪkiəm/ *noun* an arm, especially the upper arm between the elbow and the shoulder (NOTE: The plural is **brachia**.)

**brachy-** /bræki/ *prefix* short

**brachycephaly** /ˌbrækiˈsefəli/ *noun* a condition in which the skull is shorter than usual

**brachytherapy** /ˌbrækiˈθerəpi/ *noun* a radioactive treatment in which the radioactive material actually touches the tissue being treated

**Bradford's frame** /ˈbrædfɔːz freɪm/ *noun* a frame of metal and cloth, used to support a patient [After Edward Hickling Bradford (1848–1926), US orthopaedic surgeon.]

**brady-** /brædi/ *prefix* slow

**bradycardia** /ˌbrædiˈkɑːdiə/ *noun* a slow rate of heart contraction, shown by a slow pulse rate of less than 70 beats per minute

**bradykinesia** /ˌbrædiˈkaɪniːziə/ *noun* a condition in which the someone walks slowly and makes slow movements because of disease

**bradykinin** /ˌbrædiˈkaɪnɪn/ *noun* a chemical produced in the blood when tissues are injured, that plays a role in inflammation. ⚭ **kinin**

**bradypnoea** /ˌbrædiˈpniːə/ *noun* unusually slow breathing

**Braille** /breɪl/ *noun* a system of writing using raised dots on the paper to indicate letters which a blind person can read by passing their fingers over the page ○ *The book has been published in Braille.* [Introduced 1829–30. After Louis Braille (1809–52), blind Frenchman and teacher of the blind; he introduced the system which had originally been proposed by Charles Barbier in 1820.]

**brain** /breɪn/ *noun* the part of the central nervous system situated inside the skull. Also called **encephalon**. See illustration at **BRAIN** in Supplement

**brain damage** /ˈbreɪn ˌdæmɪdʒ/ *noun* damage caused to the brain as a result of oxygen and sugar deprivation, e.g. after a haemorrhage, accident, or though disease

**brain death** /ˈbreɪn deθ/ *noun* a condition in which the nerves in the brain stem have died, and the person can be certified as dead, although the heart may not have stopped beating

**brain haemorrhage** /breɪn ˈhem(ə)rɪdʒ/ *noun* same as **cerebral haemorrhage**

**brain scan** /ˈbreɪn skæn/ *noun* an examination of the inside of the brain, made by passing X-rays



through the head, using a scanner, and reconstituting the images on a computer monitor

**brain stem** /'breɪn stem/ *noun* the lower narrow part of the brain which connects the brain to the spinal cord

**brain tumour** /'breɪn ˌtʃu:mə/ *noun* a tumour which grows in the brain

**bran** /bræn/ *noun* the outside covering of the wheat seed, removed when making white flour, but an important source of roughage in the diet

**branchia** /'bræŋkiə/ *noun* a breathing organ similar to the gill of a fish found in human embryos in the early stages of development (NOTE: The plural is **branchiae**.)

**branchial** /'bræŋkiəl/ *adjective* referring to the branchiae

**branchial cyst** /,bræŋkiəl 'sɪst/ *noun* a cyst on the side of the neck of an embryo

**branchial pouch** /,bræŋkiəl 'paʊtʃ/ *noun* a pouch on the side of the neck of an embryo

**Braun's frame** /,braʊnz 'freɪm/, **Braun's splint** /,braʊnz 'splɪnt/ *noun* a metal splint and frame to which pulleys are attached, used for holding up a fractured leg while the person is lying in bed [After Heinrich Friedrich Wilhelm Braun (1862–1934), German surgeon.]

**Braxton-Hicks contractions** /,brækstən 'hɪks kən, trækʃənz/ *plural noun* contractions of the uterus which occur throughout a pregnancy and become more frequent and stronger towards the end [After Dr Braxton-Hicks, 19th century British physician.]

**breakbone fever** /'breɪkbəʊn ˌfi:vəl/ *noun* same as **dengue**

**break down** /,breɪk 'daʊn/ *verb* **1.** to experience a sudden physical or psychological illness (*informal*) ○ *After she lost her husband, her health broke down.* **2.** to start to cry and become upset (*informal*) ○ *She broke down as she described the symptoms to the doctor.* **3.** to split or cause to split into smaller chemical components, as in the digestion of food

**breast** /brest/ *noun* one of two glands in a woman which secrete milk. Also called **mamma** (NOTE: For other terms referring to breasts, see words beginning with **mamm-**, **mammo-**, **mast-**, **masto-**.)

**breastbone** /'breɪstbəʊn/ *noun* a bone which is in the centre of the front of the thorax and to which the ribs are connected. Also called **ster-num**

**breast cancer** /'brest ˌkænsə/ *noun* a malignant tumour in a breast

**breast-fed** /'brest fed/ *adjective* referring to a baby which is fed from the mother's breasts ○ *She was breast-fed for the first two months.*

**breast implant** /'brest ˌɪmplɑ:nt/ *noun* a sac containing silicone, implanted to improve the appearance of a breast

**breast milk** /'brest mɪlk/ *noun* the milk produced by a woman who has recently had a baby

**breast palpation** /'brest pælˌpeɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* feeling a breast to see if a lump is present which might indicate breast cancer

**breast pump** /'brest ˌpʌmp/ *noun* an instrument for taking milk from a breast

**breast reconstruction** /'brest rɪˌkɒnˌstrʌkʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the construction of a new breast for a woman who has had a breast removed because of cancer

**breath** /breθ/ *noun* air which goes in and out of the body when you breathe ○ *He ran so fast he was out of breath.* ○ *Stop for a moment to get your breath back.* ○ *She took a deep breath and dived into the water.*

**breathe** /bri:ð/ *verb* to take air in and blow air out through the nose or mouth ○ *The patient has begun to breathe normally.*

**breath-holding attack** /'breθ ˌhəʊldɪŋ əˌtæk/ *noun* a period when a young child stops breathing, usually because he or she is angry

**breathing** /'bri:ðɪŋ/ *noun* same as **respiration** ○ *If breathing is difficult or has stopped, begin artificial ventilation immediately.* (NOTE: For other terms referring to breathing see words beginning with **pneum-**, **pneumo-**, **pneumat-**, **pneumato-**.)

**breathlessness** /'breθləsnəs/ *noun* difficulty in breathing enough air

**breech** /bri:tʃ/ *noun* the buttocks, especially of a baby ■ *adjective* describes a birth in which the baby is delivered buttocks first, not in the normal head first position, or describes a buttocks-first presentation

**breech birth** /'bri:tʃ ˌbɜ:θ/, **breech delivery** /'bri:tʃ dɪˌlɪv(ə)ri/ *noun* a birth in which the baby's buttocks appear first rather than its head

**breech presentation** /'bri:tʃ ˌprez(ə)n 'teɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a position of the baby in the uterus in which the buttocks will appear first during childbirth

**bregma** /'bregmə/ *noun* the point at the top of the head where the soft gap between the bones of a baby's skull hardens

**bretylium tosylate** /brəˌtɪliəm ˈtɒsɪleɪt/ *noun* an agent used to block adrenergic transmitter release

**bridge** /brɪdʒ/ *noun* **1.** the top part of the nose where it joins the forehead **2.** an artificial tooth or set of teeth which is joined to natural teeth which hold it in place **3.** a part joining two or more other parts

**Bright's disease** /'braɪts dɪˌzɪ:z/ *noun* inflammation of the kidneys, characterised by albuminuria and high blood pressure. Also called **glomerulonephritis** [Described 1836. After Richard Bright (1789–1858), physician at Guy's Hospital, London, UK]

**British anti-lewisite** /ˌbrɪtɪʃ ˌæntiˈluːɪsaɪt/ *noun* an antidote for gases which cause blistering, also used to treat cases of poisoning such as mercury poisoning. Abbreviation **BAL**

**British Dental Association** /ˌbrɪtɪʃ ˈdent(ə)l əsəʊsi,eɪf(ə)n/ *noun* in the UK, a professional association of dentists. Abbreviation **BDA**

**British Medical Association** /ˌbrɪtɪʃ ˈmedɪk(ə)l əsəʊsi,eɪf(ə)n/ *noun* in the UK, a professional association of doctors. Abbreviation **BMA**

**British National Formulary** /ˌbrɪtɪʃ ˌnæf(ə)nəl ˈfɔːmjʊləri/ *noun* a book listing key information on the prescribing, dispensing and administration of prescription drugs used in the UK. Abbreviation **BNF**

**British Pharmacopoeia** /ˌbrɪtɪʃ ˌfɑːmækə ˈpiːə/ *noun* a book listing drugs approved in the UK and their dosages. Abbreviation **BP**

**brittle bone disease** /ˌbrɪt(ə)l ˈbəʊn dɪˌziːz/ *noun* 1. same as **osteogenesis imperfecta** 2. same as **osteoporosis**

**broad** /brɔːd/ *adjective* wide in relation to length

**Broadbent's sign** /ˈbrɔːdbents saɪn/ *noun* a movement of someone's left side near the lower ribs at each beat of the heart, indicating adhesion between the diaphragm and pericardium in cases of pericarditis [After Sir William Henry Broadbent (1835–1907), British physician.]

**broad-spectrum antibiotic** /ˌbrɔːd ˌspektrəm ˌæntɪbaɪˈɒtɪk/ *noun* an antibiotic used to control many types of microorganism

**Broca's aphasia** /ˌbrɔːkəz əˈfeɪziə/ *noun* a condition in which someone is unable to speak or write, as a result of damage to Broca's area

**Broca's area** /ˈbrɔːkəz ˌeəriə/ *noun* an area on the left side of the brain which governs the motor aspects of speaking [Described 1861. After Pierre Henri Paul Broca (1824–80), French surgeon and anthropologist. A pioneer of neurosurgery, he also invented various instruments, described muscular dystrophy before Duchenne, and recognised rickets as a nutritional disorder before Virchow.]

**Brodie's abscess** /ˌbrɔːdɪz ˈæbses/ *noun* an abscess of a bone, caused by staphylococcal osteomyelitis [Described 1832. After Sir Benjamin Collins Brodie (1783–1862), British surgeon.]

**bromhidrosis** /ˌbrɒmɪˈdrɔʊsɪs/ *noun* a condition in which body sweat has an unpleasant smell

**bromide** /ˈbrɔːmaɪd/ *noun* a bromine salt (NOTE: Bromides are used as sedatives.)

**bromine** /ˈbrɔːmiːn/ *noun* a chemical element (NOTE: The chemical symbol is **Br**.)

**bromism** /ˈbrɔːmɪz(ə)m/ *noun* chronic ill health caused by excessive use of bromides

**bromocriptine** /ˌbrɔːməʊˈkrɪptɪːn/ *noun* a drug which functions like dopamine, used to treat excessive lactation, breast pain, some forms of infertility, growth disorder and Parkinson's disease

**bronch-** /brɒŋk/, **bronchi-** /brɒŋki/ *prefix* same as **broncho-** (used before vowels)

**bronchi** /ˈbrɒŋki/ *plural of bronchus*

**bronchial** /ˈbrɒŋkiəl/ *adjective* referring to the bronchi

**bronchial breath sounds** /ˌbrɒŋkiəl ˈbreθ ˌsaʊndz/ *plural noun* distinctive breath sounds from the lungs which help diagnosis

**bronchiectasis** /ˌbrɒŋkiˈektəsis/ *noun* a disorder of the bronchi which become wide, infected and filled with pus (NOTE: Bronchiectasis can lead to pneumonia.)

**bronchio-** /brɒŋkiəʊ/ *prefix* referring to the bronchioles

**bronchiolar** /ˌbrɒŋkiˈəʊlə/ *adjective* referring to the bronchioles

**bronchiole** /ˈbrɒŋkiəʊl/ *noun* a very small air tube in the lungs leading from a bronchus to the alveoli. See illustration at **LUNGS** in Supplement

**bronchiolitis** /ˌbrɒŋkiəʊˈlaɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the bronchioles, usually in small children

**bronchitic** /brɒŋˈkɪtɪk/ *adjective* referring to bronchitis

**bronchitis** /brɒŋˈkaɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the mucous membrane of the bronchi

**broncho-** /brɒŋkəʊ/ *prefix* referring to the windpipe

**bronchoconstrictor** /ˌbrɒŋkəʊkənˈstriktə/ *noun* a drug which narrows the bronchi

**bronchodilator** /ˌbrɒŋkəʊdaɪˈleɪtə/ *noun* a drug which makes the bronchi wider, used in the treatment of asthma and allergy (NOTE: Bronchodilators usually have names ending in **-terol**; however, the most common bronchodilator is **salbutamol**.)

**bronchography** /brɒŋˈkɒgrəfi/ *noun* an X-ray examination of the lungs after an opaque substance has been put into the bronchi

**bronchomediastinal trunk** /ˌbrɒŋkəʊ miːdiəˌstaɪn(ə)l ˈtrʌŋk/ *noun* the set of lymph nodes draining part of the chest

**bronchomycosis** /ˌbrɒŋkəʊmaɪˈkəʊsɪs/ *noun* an infection of the bronchi by a fungus

**bronchophony** /brɒŋˈkɒfəni/ *noun* vibrations of the voice heard over the lungs, indicating solidification in the lungs

**bronchopleural** /ˌbrɒŋkəʊˈplʊərəl/ *adjective* referring to a bronchus and the pleura

**bronchopneumonia** /ˌbrɒŋkəʊnɪˈjuːməniə/ *noun* an infectious inflammation of the bronchi-

oles, which may lead to general infection of the lungs

**bronchopulmonary** /,brɒŋkəʊ'pʌlmən(ə)rɪ/ *adjective* referring to the bronchi and the lungs

**bronchorrhoea** /,brɒŋkəʊ'ri:ə/ *noun* the secretion of mucus by the bronchi

**bronchoscope** /'brɒŋkəʊskəʊp/ *noun* an instrument which is passed down the trachea into the lungs, which a doctor can use to inspect the inside passages of the lungs

**bronchoscopy** /brɒŋ'kɒskəpi/ *noun* an examination of a person's bronchi using a bronchoscope

**bronchospasm** /'brɒŋkəʊspæz(ə)m/ *noun* a tightening of the bronchial muscles which causes the tubes to contract, as in asthma

**bronchspirometry** /,brɒŋkəʊspai'rɒmɪtri/ *noun* a procedure for measuring the volume of the lungs

**bronchostenosis** /,brɒŋkəʊste'nəʊsɪs/ *noun* an unusual constriction of the bronchial tubes

**bronchotracheal** /,brɒŋkəʊtrə'ki:əl/ *adjective* referring to the bronchi and the trachea

**bronchus** /'brɒŋkəs/ *noun* one of the two air passages leading from the trachea into the lungs, where they split into many bronchioles. See illustration at **LUNGS** in Supplement (NOTE: The plural is **bronchi**.)

**bronze diabetes** /,brɒnz daɪə'bi:ti:z/ *noun* same as **haemochromatosis**

**Broviac catheter** /'brəʊviæk ,kæθɪtə/ *noun* a type of thin catheter used to insert into a vein

**brow** /braʊ/ *noun* same as **eyebrow**

**brown fat** /,braʊn 'fæt/ *noun* dark-coloured body fat that can easily be converted to energy and helps to control body temperature

**Brown-Séquard syndrome** /,braʊn 'seɪkɑ: ,sɪndrəʊm/ *noun* a condition in which the spinal cord has been partly severed or compressed, with the result that the lower half of the body is paralysed on one side and loses feeling in the other side [Described 1851. After Charles Edouard Brown-Séquard (1817–94), French physiologist.]

**brucellosis** /,bru:si'ləʊsɪs/ *noun* a disease which can be caught from cattle or goats or from drinking infected milk, spread by a species of the bacterium *Brucella*. The symptoms include tiredness, arthritis, headache, sweating, irritability and swelling of the spleen. Also called **abortus fever**, **Malta fever**, **mountain fever**, **undulant fever**

**bruise** /bru:z/ *noun* a dark painful area on the skin, where blood has escaped under the skin following a blow. ♪ **black eye** ■ *verb* to cause a bruise on part of the body ○ *She bruised her knee on the corner of the table.* □ *she bruises easily* even a soft blow will give her a bruise

**bruised** /bru:zd/ *adjective* painful after a blow or showing the marks of a bruise ○ *a badly bruised leg*

**bruising** /'bru:zɪŋ/ *noun* an area of bruises ○ *The baby has bruising on the back and legs.*

**bruit** /bru:t/ *noun* an unusual noise heard through a stethoscope

**Brunner's glands** /'brʊnəz ,glændz/ *plural noun* glands in the duodenum and jejunum [Described 1687. After Johann Konrad Brunner (1653–1727), Swiss anatomist at Heidelberg, then at Strasbourg.]

**bruxism** /'brʌksɪz(ə)m/ *noun* the action of grinding the teeth, as a habit

**BSE** *abbreviation* bovine spongiform encephalopathy

**bubo** /'bjʊ:bʊʊ/ *noun* a swelling of a lymph node in the groin or armpit

**bubonic plague** /bjʊ:,bɒnɪk 'pleɪg/ *noun* a usually fatal infectious disease caused by *Yersinia pestis* in the lymph system, transmitted to humans by fleas from rats

**buccal** /'bʌk(ə)/ *adjective* referring to the cheek or mouth

**buccinator** /'bʌksɪneɪtə/ *noun* a cheek muscle which helps the jaw to move when chewing

**Budd–Chiari syndrome** /,bʌd kɪ'eəri ,sɪndrəʊm/ *noun* a disease of the liver, where thrombosis has occurred in the hepatic veins [Described 1845. After George Budd (1808–82), Professor of Medicine at King's College Hospital, London; Hans von Chiari (1851–1916), Viennese pathologist who was Professor of Pathological Anatomy at Strasbourg and later at Prague.]

**budesonide** /bjʊ:'desənaɪd/ *noun* a corticosteroid drug taken by inhalation or in tablets, used in the treatment of hay fever and nasal polyps

**Buerger's disease** /'bɜ:gəz dɪ,zɪ:z/ *noun* same as **thromboangiitis obliterans** [Described 1908. After Leo Buerger (1879–1943), New York physician of Viennese origin.]

**buffer** /'bʌfə/ *noun* a substance that keeps a constant balance between acid and alkali ■ *verb* to prevent a solution from becoming acid

**buffer action** /'bʌfə ,ækʃən/ *noun* the balancing process between acid and alkali

**buffered** /'bʌfəd/ *adjective* prevented from becoming acid ○ *buffered aspirin*

**bug** /bʌg/ *noun* an infectious disease (*informal*) ○ *He caught a bug on holiday.* ○ *Half the staff have got a stomach bug.*

**bulb** /bʌlb/ *noun* a round part at the end of an organ or bone

**bulbar** /'bʌlbə/ *adjective* 1. referring to a bulb 2. referring to the medulla oblongata

**bulbospongiosus muscle** /,bʌlbəʊspɒndʒi 'əʊsəs ˌmɑːsəl/ *noun* a muscle in the perineum behind the penis

**bulbourethral gland** /,bʌlbəʊjʊ'rɪ:θrəl ˌglænd/ *noun* one of two glands at the base of the penis which secrete into the urethra. ◊ **gland**

**bulimia** /bu'liːmiə/, **bulimia nervosa** /bu'liːmiə nə'vʊsə/ *noun* a psychological condition in which a person eats too much and is incapable of controlling his or her eating. The eating is followed by behaviour designed to prevent weight gain, e.g. vomiting, use of laxatives or excessive exercise.

**bullae** /'bʊlə/ *noun* a large blister (NOTE: The plural is **bullae**.)

**bumetanide** /bju:'metənaɪd/ *noun* a drug which helps a patient to produce urine, used in the treatment of swelling caused by fluid accumulating in the tissues

**bumper fracture** /'bʌmpə ˌfræktʃə/ *noun* a fracture in the upper part of the tibia (NOTE: It has this name because it can be caused by a blow from the bumper of a car.)

**bundle branch block** /'bʌnd(ə)l brɑ:ntʃ ˌblɒk/ *noun* an unusual condition of the heart's conduction tissue

**bundle of His** /,bʌnd(ə)l əv 'hɪs/ *noun* same as **atrioventricular bundle** [Described 1893. After Ludwig His (1863–1934), Professor of Anatomy successively at Leipzig, Basle, Göttingen and Berlin.]

**bunion** /'bʌŋjən/ *noun* an inflammation and swelling of the big toe, caused by tight shoes which force the toe sideways so that a callus develops over the joint between the toe and the metatarsal

**buphthalmos** /bʌf'θælməs/ *noun* a type of congenital glaucoma occurring in infants

**bupivacaine** /bju:'pɪvəkeɪn/ *noun* a powerful local anaesthetic, used in epidural anaesthesia

**buprenorphine** /bju:'preɪnəfi:n/ *noun* an opiate drug used in the relief of moderate to severe pain, and as an opioid substitute in treating drug addiction

**Burkitt's tumour** /,bɜ:kɪts 'tju:mə/, **Burkitt's lymphoma** /,bɜ:kɪts lɪm'fəʊmə/ *noun* a malignant tumour, usually on the maxilla, found especially in children in Africa [Described 1957. After Denis Parsons Burkitt (1911–93), formerly Senior Surgeon, Kampala, Uganda; later a member of the Medical Research Council (UK).]

**burn** /bɜ:n/ *noun* an injury to skin and tissue caused by light, heat, radiation, electricity or chemicals ■ **verb** to harm or destroy something by fire ◊ *She burnt her hand on the hot frying pan.* ◊ *Most of his hair or his skin was burnt off.* (NOTE: **burning** – **burnt** or **burned**)

**burning** /'bɜ:nɪŋ/ *adjective* referring to a feeling similar to that of being hurt by fire ◊ *She had a burning pain or in her chest.*

**burr** /bɜ:/ *noun* a bit used with a drill to make holes in a bone such as the cranium or in a tooth

**bursa** /'bɜ:sə/ *noun* a sac containing fluid, forming part of the usual structure of a joint such as the knee and elbow, where it protects against frequent pressure and rubbing (NOTE: The plural is **bursae**.)

**bursitis** /bɜ:'sartɪs/ *noun* the inflammation of a bursa, especially in the shoulder

**Buscopan** /'bʌskəpæn/ a trade name for a form of hyoscine

**butobarbitone** /,bju:təʊ'bɑ:bitəʊn/ *noun* a barbiturate drug used as a sedative and hypnotic

**buttock** /'bʌtək/ *noun* one of the two fleshy parts below the back, on which a person sits, made up mainly of the gluteal muscles. Also called **nates**

**buttonhole surgery** /'bʌt(ə)nhəʊl ˌsɜ:dʒəri/ *noun* a surgical operation through a small hole in the body, using an endoscope

**bypass** /'baɪpɑ:s/ *noun* **1.** a surgical operation to redirect the blood, usually using a grafted blood vessel and usually performed when one of the person's own blood vessels is blocked **2.** a new route for the blood created by a bypass operation

**byssinosis** /,bɪsɪ'nəʊsɪs/ *noun* a lung disease which is a form of pneumoconiosis caused by inhaling cotton dust

# C

**c** *symbol* centi-

**C** *symbol* Celsius

**CABG** *abbreviation* coronary artery bypass graft

**cachet** /'kæʃeɪ/ *noun* a quantity of a drug wrapped in paper, to be swallowed

**cachexia** /kæ'keksɪə/ *noun* a state of ill health characterised by wasting and general weakness

**cadaver** /kə'dævə/ *noun* a dead body, especially one used for dissection

**cadaveric** /kə'dævərɪk/, **cadaverous** /kə'dæv(ə)rəs/ *adjective* referring to a person who is thin or wasting away

**caecal** /'si:k(ə)/ *adjective* referring to the caecum

**caec sigmoidostomy** /,si:kəʊ,sɪgmɔɪ'dɒstəmi/ *noun* an operation to open up a connection between the caecum and the sigmoid colon

**caecostomy** /si:'kɒstəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to make an opening between the caecum and the abdominal wall to allow faeces to be passed without going through the rectum and anus

**caecum** /'si:kəm/ *noun* the wider part of the large intestine in the lower right-hand side of the abdomen at the point where the small intestine joins it and which has the appendix attached to it. See illustration at **DIGESTIVE SYSTEM** in Supplement. Also called **cecum** (NOTE: The plural is **caeca**.)

**caesarean** /sɪ'zeəriən/, **caesarean section** /sɪ'zeəriən ,sekʃən/ *noun* a surgical operation to deliver a baby by cutting through the abdominal wall into the uterus. Compare **vaginal delivery**

**caesium** /'si:ziəm/ *noun* a radioactive element, used in treatment by radiation (NOTE: The chemical symbol is **Cs**.)

**caesium-137** /,si:ziəm wʌn θri: 'sev(ə)n/ *noun* a radioactive substance used in radiology

**café au lait spots** /,kæfeɪ əʊ 'leɪ spɒts/ *plural noun* brown spots on the skin, which are an indication of von Recklinghausen's disease

**caffeine** /'kæfi:n/ *noun* an alkaloid found in coffee, tea and chocolate, which acts as a stimulant

**caisson disease** /'keɪs(ə)n dɪ,zɪ:z/ *noun* a condition in which a person experiences pains in the joints and stomach, and dizziness caused by nitrogen in the blood. Also called **the bends**, **compressed air sickness**, **decompression sickness**

**calamine** /'kæləmaɪn/, **calamine lotion** /'kæləmaɪn ,ləʊʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a lotion, based on zinc oxide, which helps relieve skin irritation, caused e.g. by sunburn or chickenpox

**calc-** /kælk/ *prefix* same as **calci-** (used before vowels)

**calcaemia** /kæl'si:miə/ *noun* a condition in which the blood contains an unusually large amount of calcium

**calcaneal** /kæl'keɪniəl/ *adjective* referring to the calcaneus

**calcaneus** /kæl'keɪniəs/, **calcaneum** /kæl'keɪniəm/ *noun* the heel bone, situated underneath the talus. See illustration at **FOOT** in Supplement

**calcareous degeneration** /kæl,keəriəs dɪ ,dʒenə'reɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the formation of calcium on bones or at joints in old age

**calci-** /kælsi/ *prefix* referring to calcium

**calcification** /,kælsɪfɪ'keɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a process of hardening caused by the formation of deposits of calcium salts

**calcified** /'kælsɪfaɪd/ *adjective* made hard ○ *Bone is calcified connective tissue.*

**calcinosis** /,kælsi'neʊsɪs/ *noun* a medical condition where deposits of calcium salts form in joints, muscles and organs

**calcitonin** /,kælsi'təʊnɪn/ *noun* a hormone produced by the thyroid gland, which is believed to regulate the level of calcium in the blood. Also called **thyrocalcitonin**

**calcium** /'kælsiəm/ *noun* a metallic chemical element which is a major component of bones and teeth and which is essential for various bodily processes such as blood clotting (NOTE: The chemical symbol is **Ca**.)

**calcium antagonist** /'kælsiəm æn,tæɡəniʃt/ *noun* a drug which makes the arteries wider and slows the heart rate. It is used in the treatment of angina.

**calcium channel blocker** /'kælsiəm ,tʃæn(ə)l ,blɒkə/, **calcium blocker** /'kælsiəm ,blɒkə/ *noun* a drug which affects the smooth muscle of the cardiovascular system, used in the treatment of angina and hypertension (NOTE: Calcium channel blockers have names ending in **-dipine**: **nifedipine**. Not to be used in heart failure as they reduce cardiac function further.)

**calculus** /,kælkjʊ'ləʊsɪs/ *noun* a condition in which calculi exist in an organ

**calculus** /'kælkjʊləs/ *noun* a hard mass like a little piece of stone, which forms inside the body. Also called **stone** (NOTE: The plural is **calculi**.)

**Caldwell–Luc operation** /,kɑ:ldwel 'lu:k ɒpə'reɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a surgical operation to drain the maxillary sinus by making an incision above the canine tooth [Described 1893. After George Walter Caldwell (1834–1918), US physician; Henri Luc (1855–1925), French laryngologist.]

**calibrator** /'kælibreɪtə/ *noun* an instrument used to enlarge a tube or passage

**caliectasis** /,keɪli'ektəsis/ *noun* swelling of the calyces

**callisthenic** /,kælis'thenɪk/ *adjective* relating to callisthenics

**callisthenics** /,kælis'thenɪks/ *plural noun* energetic physical exercises for improving fitness and muscle tone, including push-ups, sit-ups and star jumps

**callosity** /kə'lɒsɪti/ *noun* a hard patch on the skin, e.g. a corn, resulting from frequent pressure or rubbing. Also called **callus**

**callus** /'kæləs/ *noun* **1.** same as **callosity** **2.** tissue which forms round a broken bone as it starts to mend, leading to consolidation ○ *Callus formation is more rapid in children and young adults than in elderly people.*

**calor** /'kælə/ *noun* heat

**caloric** /kə'lɒrɪk/ *adjective* referring to calories or to heat

**calorie** /'kæləri/ *noun* **1.** a unit of measurement of heat or energy, equivalent to the amount of heat needed to raise the temperature of 1g of water by 1°C. Now called **joule** **2. also** **Calorie** a unit of measurement of energy in food (*informal*) ○ *a low-calorie diet* Now called **joule** □ **to count calories** to be careful about how much you eat

**calvaria** /kæl'veəriə/, **calvarium** /kæl'veəriəm/ *noun* the top part of the skull

**calyx** /'keɪlɪks/ *noun* a part of the body shaped like a cup especially the tube leading to a renal pyramid. See illustration at **KIDNEY** in Supplement (NOTE: The plural is **calyces**.)

**CAM** /,si: eɪ 'em/ *abbreviation* complementary and alternative medicine

**camphor** /'kæmfə/ *noun* white crystals with a strong smell, made from a tropical tree, used to keep insects away or as a liniment

**Campylobacter** /'kæmpɪləʊ,bæktə/ *noun* a bacterium which is a common cause of food poisoning in humans and of spontaneous abortion in farm animals

**canal** /kə'næl/ *noun* a tube along which something flows

**canaliculitis** /,kænəlɪkjʊ'laitɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the tear duct canal

**canaliculus** /,kænə'lɪkjʊləs/ *noun* a little canal, e.g. a canal leading to the Haversian systems in compact bone, or a canal leading to the lacrimal duct (NOTE: The plural is **canaliculi**.)

**cancellous bone** /'kænsələs ,bəʊn/ *noun* a light spongy bone tissue which forms the inner core of a bone and also the ends of long bones. See illustration at **BONE STRUCTURE** in Supplement

**cancer** /'kænsə/ *noun* a malignant growth or tumour which develops in tissue and destroys it, which can spread by metastasis to other parts of the body and which cannot be controlled by the body itself ○ *Cancer cells developed in the lymph.* ○ *She has been diagnosed as having lung cancer or as having cancer of the lung.* (NOTE: For other terms referring to cancer, see words beginning with **carcin-**.)

**cancerophobia** /,kænsərəʊ'fəʊbiə/ *noun* a fear of cancer

**cancer phobia** /'kænsə ,fəʊbiə/ *noun* same as **cancerophobia**

**cancrem oris** /,kæŋkrəm 'ɔ:ɪrɪs/ *noun* severe ulcers in the mouth, leading to gangrene. Also called **noma**

**candidiasis** /,kændɪ'daɪsɪs/, **candidosis** /,kændɪ'dəʊsɪs/ *noun* infection with a species of the fungus *Candida*

**canicula fever** /kə'nikələ ,fi:və/ *noun* a form of leptospirosis, giving high fever and jaundice

**canine** /'keɪnɪn/, **canine tooth** /'keɪnɪn ,tu:θ/ *noun* a pointed tooth next to an incisor. See illustration at **TEETH** in Supplement

**canities** /kə'nɪʃi:z/ *noun* a loss of pigments, which makes the hair turn white

**cannabis** /'kænəbɪs/ *noun* a drug made from the dried leaves or flowers of the Indian hemp plant. Recreational use of cannabis is illegal and its use to relieve the pain associated with conditions such as multiple sclerosis is controversial. Also called **hashish**, **marijuana**

**cannula** /'kænjʊlə/ *noun* a tube with a trocar or blunt needle inside, inserted into the body to introduce fluids

**canthal** /'kænθəl/ *adjective* referring to the corner of the eye

**cantholysis** /kæn'thɒləsɪs/ *noun* same as **canthoplasty**

**canthoplasty** /'kænθəplæsti/ *noun* **1.** an operation to repair the canthus of the eye **2.** an operation

tion to cut through the canthus to enlarge the groove in the eyelid

**canthus** /'kænthəs/ *noun* a corner of the eye

**cap** /kæp/ *noun* **1.** a covering which protects something **2.** an artificial hard covering for a damaged or broken tooth

**CAPD** *abbreviation* continuous ambulatory peritoneal dialysis

**capeline bandage** /'kæpəlɪn ˌbændɪdʒ/ *noun* a bandage shaped like a cap, either for the head, or to cover a stump after amputation

**capillary** /kə'pɪləri/ *noun* a tiny blood vessel between the arterioles and the venules, which carries blood and nutrients into the tissues

**capita** /'kæpɪtə/ plural of **caput**

**capitate** /'kæpɪteɪt/, **capitate bone** /'kæpɪteɪt ˌbɒn/ *noun* the largest of the eight small carpal bones in the wrist. See illustration at **HAND** in Supplement

**capitellum** /,kæpɪ'teləm/ *noun* a rounded enlarged part at the end of a bone, especially this part of the upper arm bone, the humerus, that forms the elbow joint with one of the lower bones, the radius. Also called **capitulum of humerus** (NOTE: The plural is **capitella**.)

**capitulum** /kə'pɪtjʊləm/ *noun* the rounded end of a bone which articulates with another bone, e.g. the distal end of the humerus (NOTE: The plural is **capitula**.)

**capitulum of humerus** /kə'pɪtjʊləm əv 'hju:mərəs/ *noun* same as **capitellum**

**caplet** /'kæplət/ *noun* a small oblong tablet with a covering that dissolves easily and which usually cannot be broken in two

**capsular** /'kæpsjələ/ *adjective* referring to a capsule

**capsule** /'kæpsju:l/ *noun* **1.** a membrane round an organ or joint **2.** a small hollow digestible case filled with a drug that is taken by swallowing ○ *She swallowed three capsules of painkiller.* ○ *The doctor prescribed the drug in capsule form.*

**capsulectomy** /,kæpsju'lektəmi/ *noun* the surgical removal of the capsule round a joint

**capsulitis** /,kæpsju'lartɪs/ *noun* inflammation of a capsule

**capsulotomy** /,kæpsju'lɒtəmi/ *noun* a surgical procedure involving cutting into the capsule around a body part, e.g. cutting into the lens of the eye during the removal of a cataract

**captopril** /'kæptəprɪl/ *noun* a drug which helps to prevent the arteries from being made narrower by an angiotensin. It is used to control high blood pressure.

**caput** /'kæpt/ *noun* the head (NOTE: The plural is **capita**.)

**carbamazepine** /,kɑ:bə'mæzəpi:n/ *noun* a drug which reduces pain and helps to prevent con-

vulsions. It is used in the treatment of epilepsy, pain and bipolar disorder.

**carbenoxolone** /,kɑ:bə'nɒksələʊn/ *noun* a liquorice agent, used to treat stomach ulcers

**carbidopa** /,kɑ:bɪ'dəʊpə/ *noun* an inhibitor used to enable levodopa to enter the brain in larger quantities in the treatment of Parkinson's disease

**carbimazole** /kɑ:'bɪməzəʊl/ *noun* a drug which helps to prevent the formation of thyroid hormones, used in the management of hyperthyroidism

**carbohydrate** /,kɑ:bəʊ'hɑ:dreɪt/ *noun* **1.** a biological compound containing carbon, hydrogen and oxygen. Carbohydrates derive from sugar and are an important source of food and energy. **2.** food containing carbohydrates ○ *high carbohydrate drinks*

**carbolic acid** /kɑ:,bɒlɪk 'æsɪd/ *noun* same as **phenol**

**carbon** /'kɑ:bən/ *noun* one of the common non-metallic elements, an essential component of living matter and organic chemical compounds (NOTE: The chemical symbol is **C**.)

**carbon dioxide** /,kɑ:bən daɪ'ɒksaɪd/ *noun* a colourless gas produced by the body's metabolism as the tissues burn carbon, and breathed out by the lungs as waste (NOTE: The chemical symbol is **CO<sub>2</sub>**.)

**carbon dioxide snow** /,kɑ:bən daɪ'ɒksaɪd 'snəʊ/ *noun* solid carbon dioxide, used in treating skin growths such as warts, or to preserve tissue samples

**carbonic anhydrase** /kɑ:,bɒnɪk æn 'hɑ:dreɪz/ *noun* an enzyme which acts as a buffer and regulates the body's water balance, including gastric acid secretion and aqueous humour production

**carbon monoxide** /,kɑ:bən mə'nɒksaɪd/ *noun* a poisonous gas found in fumes from car engines, from burning gas and cigarette smoke (NOTE: The chemical symbol is **CO**.)

**carboxyhaemoglobin** /kɑ:,bɒksɪhi:mə 'gləʊbɪn/ *noun* a compound of carbon monoxide and haemoglobin formed when a person breathes in carbon monoxide from tobacco smoke or car exhaust fumes

**carboxyhaemoglobinaemia** /kɑ:,bɒksɪhi:mə'gləʊbɪ'nɪmiə/ *noun* the presence of carboxyhaemoglobin in the blood

**carbuncle** /'kɑ:bʌŋkəl/ *noun* a localised staphylococcal infection, which goes deep into the tissue

**carcin-** /kɑ:si:n/ *prefix* same as **carcino-** (used before vowels)

**carcino-** /kɑ:si:nə/ *prefix* referring to carcinoma or cancer

**carcinogen** /kɑ:'sɪnədʒən/ *noun* a substance which produces a carcinoma or cancer

**carcinogenesis** /,kɑ:si'nə'dʒenəsis/ *noun* the process of forming a carcinoma in tissue

**carcinogenic** /,kɑ:si'nə'dʒenik/ *adjective* causing a carcinoma or cancer

**carcinoid** /'kɑ:si'nɔɪd/, **carcinoid tumour** /'kɑ:si'nɔɪd ,tʃu:mə/ *noun* an intestinal tumour, especially in the appendix, which causes diarrhoea

**carcinoma** /,kɑ:si'nəʊmə/ *noun* a cancer of the epithelium or glands

**carcinomatosis** /,kɑ:si'nəʊmə'təʊsɪs/ *noun* a carcinoma which has spread to many sites in the body

**carcinomatous** /,kɑ:si'nəʊmətəs/ *adjective* referring to carcinoma

**carcinosarcoma** /,kɑ:si'nəʊsɑ:'kəʊmə/ *noun* a malignant tumour containing elements of both a carcinoma and a sarcoma

**cardia** /'kɑ:diə/ *noun* an opening at the top of the stomach which joins it to the gullet

**cardiac** /'kɑ:diæk/ *adjective* referring to the heart

**cardiac achalasia** /,kɑ:diæk ,ækə'leɪziə/ *noun* a condition in which the patient is unable to relax the cardia, the muscle at the entrance to the stomach, with the result that food cannot enter the stomach. † **cardiomyotomy**

**cardiac arrest** /,kɑ:diæk ə'rest/ *noun* a condition in which the heart muscle stops beating

**cardiac asthma** /,kɑ:diæk ,æsmə/ *noun* difficulty in breathing caused by heart failure

**cardiac catheter** /,kɑ:diæk 'kæθɪtə/ *noun* a catheter passed through a vein into the heart, to take blood samples, to record pressure or to examine the interior of the heart before surgery

**cardiac catheterisation** /,kɑ:diæk ,kæθɪtərəi'zeɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a procedure which involves passing a catheter into the heart

**cardiac cirrhosis** /,kɑ:diæk sɪ'rəʊsɪs/ *noun* cirrhosis of the liver caused by heart disease

**cardiac compression** /,kɑ:diæk kəm'preʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the compression of the heart by fluid in the pericardium

**cardiac conducting system** /,kɑ:diæk kən'dakɪŋ ,sɪstəm/ *noun* the nerve system in the heart which links an atrium to a ventricle, so that the two beat at the same rate

**cardiac cycle** /,kɑ:diæk 'saɪk(ə)l/ *noun* the repeated beating of the heart, formed of the diastole and systole

**cardiac decompression** /,kɑ:diæk ,di:kəm'preʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the removal of a haematoma or constriction of the heart

**cardiac failure** /,kɑ:diæk 'feɪljə/ *noun* same as **heart failure**

**cardiac glycoside** /,kɑ:diæk 'glɪkəsəɪd/ *noun* a drug used in the treatment of tachycardia and atrial fibrillation, e.g. digoxin

**cardiac index** /,kɑ:diæk 'ɪndeks/ *noun* the cardiac output per square metre of body surface, usually between 3.1 and 3.8 l/min/m<sup>2</sup> (litres per minute per square metre)

**cardiac infarction** *noun* same as **myocardial infarction**

**cardiac monitor** /,kɑ:diæk 'mɒnɪtə/ *noun* same as **electrocardiograph**

**cardiac murmur** /,kɑ:diæk 'mɜ:mə/ *noun* same as **heart murmur**

**cardiac muscle** /'kɑ:diæk ,mʌs(ə)l/ *noun* a muscle in the heart which makes the heart beat

**cardiac neurosis** /,kɑ:diæk nju'rəʊsɪs/ *noun* same as **disordered action of the heart**

**cardiac notch** /,kɑ:diæk 'nɒtʃ/ *noun* **1.** a point in the left lung, where the right inside wall is bent. See illustration at **LUNGS** in Supplement **2.** a notch at the point where the oesophagus joins the greater curvature of the stomach

**cardiac orifice** /,kɑ:diæk 'ɔrɪfɪs/ *noun* an opening where the oesophagus joins the stomach

**cardiac output** /,kɑ:diæk 'aʊtpʊt/ *noun* the volume of blood expelled by each ventricle in a specific time, usually between 4.8 and 5.3 l/min (litres per minute)

**cardiac pacemaker** /,kɑ:diæk 'peɪsmɪkə/ *noun* an electronic device implanted on a patient's heart, or which a patient wears attached to the chest, which stimulates and regulates the heartbeat

**cardiac reflex** /,kɑ:diæk 'rɪ:fleks/ *noun* the reflex which controls the heartbeat automatically

**cardiac surgery** /,kɑ:diæk 'sɜ:dʒəri/ *noun* surgery to the heart

**cardiac tamponade** /,kɑ:diæk ,tæmpə'neɪd/ *noun* pressure on the heart when the pericardial cavity fills with blood. Also called **heart tamponade**

**cardiac vein** /'kɑ:diæk veɪn/ *noun* one of the veins which lead from the myocardium to the right atrium

**cardinal** /,kɑ:dɪn(ə)l 'nʌmbə/ *adjective* most important

**cardinal ligaments** /,kɑ:dɪn(ə)l 'lɪgəmənts/ *plural noun* ligaments forming a band of connective tissue that extends from the uterine cervix and vagina to the pelvic walls. Also called **Mackenrodt's ligaments**

**cardio-** /kɑ:diəʊ/ *prefix* referring to the heart

**cardiogenic** /,kɑ:diə'dʒenɪk/ *adjective* resulting from activity or disease of the heart

**cardiogram** /'kɑ:diəgræm/ *noun* a graph showing the heartbeat, produced by a cardiograph

**cardiograph** /'kɑ:diəgrɑ:f/ *noun* an instrument which records the heartbeat

**cardiography** /,kɑ:di'ɔgrəfi/ *noun* the action of recording the heartbeat



**cardiologist** /,kɑ:di'blɔ:dʒɪst/ *noun* a doctor who specialises in the study of the heart

**cardiology** /,kɑ:di'blɔ:dʒɪ/ *noun* the study of the heart, its diseases and functions

**cardiomegaly** /,kɑ:diəu'megəli/ *noun* an enlarged heart

**cardiomyopathy** /,kɑ:diəu'maɪ'ɒpəθi/ *noun* a disease of the heart muscle

**cardiomyoplasty** /,kɑ:diəu'maɪəu,plæsti/ *noun* an operation to improve the functioning of the heart, by using the latissimus dorsi as a stimulant

**cardiomyotomy** /,kɑ:diəu'maɪ'ɒtəmi/ *noun* an operation to treat cardiac achalasia by splitting the ring of muscles where the oesophagus joins the stomach. Also called **Heller's operation**

**cardiopathy** /,kɑ:di'ɒpəθi/ *noun* any kind of heart disease

**cardiophone** /'kɑ:diəfəʊn/ *noun* a microphone attached to a patient to record sounds, usually used to record the heart of an unborn baby

**cardioplegia** /,kɑ:diəu'pli:dʒiə/ *noun* the stopping of a patient's heart, by chilling it or using drugs, so that heart surgery can be performed

**cardiopulmonary** /,kɑ:diəu'pʌlmən(ə)ri/ *adjective* relating to both the heart and the lungs

**cardiopulmonary bypass** /,kɑ:diəu'pʌlmən(ə)ri 'baɪpɑ:s/ *noun* a machine or method for artificially circulating the patient's blood during open-heart surgery. The heart and lungs are cut off from the circulation and replaced by a pump.

**cardiopulmonary resuscitation** /,kɑ:diəu'pʌlmən(ə)ri rɪ,sʌsɪ'teɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* an emergency technique to make a person's heart start beating again. It involves clearing the airways and then alternately pressing on the chest and breathing into the mouth. Abbreviation **CPR**

**cardiopulmonary system** /,kɑ:diəu'pʌlmən(ə)ri ,sɪstəm/ *noun* the heart and lungs considered together as a functional unit

**cardioscope** /'kɑ:diəskəʊp/ *noun* an instrument formed of a tube with a light at the end, used to inspect the inside of the heart

**cardiospasm** /'kɑ:diəuspræz(ə)m/ *noun* same as **cardiac achalasia**

**cardiothoracic** /,kɑ:diəuθɔ'ræsi:k/ *adjective* referring to the heart and the chest region ○ a *cardiothoracic surgeon*

**cardiotocography** /,kɑ:diəuθɔ'kɒgrəfi/ *noun* the recording of the heartbeat of a fetus

**cardiotomy** /,kɑ:di'ɒtəmi/ *noun* an operation that involves cutting the wall of the heart

**cardiotomy syndrome** /,kɑ:di'ɒtəmi ,sɪndrəʊm/ *noun* fluid in the membranes round the heart after cardiomyotomy

**cardiotoxic** /,kɑ:diəu'tɒksɪk/ *adjective* which is toxic to the heart

**cardiovascular** /,kɑ:diəu'væskjʊlə/ *adjective* referring to the heart and the blood circulation system

**cardiovascular disease** /,kɑ:diəu'væskjʊlə dɪ,zɪ:z/ *noun* any disease which affects the circulatory system, e.g. hypertension

**cardiovascular system** /,kɑ:diəu'væskjʊlə ,sɪstəm/ *noun* the system of organs and blood vessels by means of which the blood circulates round the body and which includes the heart, arteries and veins

**cardioversion** /,kɑ:diəu'vɜ:ʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a procedure to correct an irregular heartbeat by applying an electrical impulse to the chest wall. ☐ **defibrillation**

**carditis** /kɑ:'dɑ:ɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the connective tissue of the heart

**care pathway** /'keə ,pɑ:θweɪ/ *noun* the entire process of diagnosis, treatment and care that a patient goes through

**care plan** /'keə plæn/ *noun* a plan drawn up by the nursing staff for the treatment of an individual patient

**caries** /'keəri:z/ *noun* decay in a tooth or bone

**carina** /kə'ri:nə/ *noun* a structure shaped like the bottom of a boat, e.g. the cartilage at the point where the trachea branches into the bronchi

**carinogenic** /,keəriəu'dʒenɪk/ *adjective* referring to a substance which causes caries

**carminative** /'kɑ:mɪnətɪv/ *noun* a substance which relieves colic or indigestion ■ *adjective* relieving colic or indigestion

**carneous mole** /,kɑ:niəs 'məʊl/ *noun* matter in the uterus after the death of a fetus

**carotenaemia** /,kærətɪ'ni:miə/ *noun* an excessive amount of carotene in the blood, usually as a result of eating too many carrots or tomatoes, which gives the skin a yellow colour. Also called **xanthaemia**

**carotene** /'kærətɪ:n/ *noun* an orange or red pigment in carrots, egg yolk and some oils, which is converted by the liver into vitamin A

**carotid** /kə'rɒtɪd/, **carotid artery** /kə,rɒtɪd 'ɑ:təri/ *noun* either of the two large arteries in the neck which supply blood to the head

**carotid artery thrombosis** /kə,rɒtɪd ,ɑ:təri θrɒm'bəʊsɪs/ *noun* the formation of a blood clot in the carotid artery

**carp-** /kɑ:p/ *prefix* same as **carpo-** (used before vowels)

**carpal** /'kɑ:p(ə)/ *adjective* referring to the wrist

**carpal bones** /'kɑ:p(ə)l bəʊnz/, **carpals** /'kɑ:p(ə)lz/ *plural noun* the eight bones which make up the carpus or wrist. See illustration at **HAND** in Supplement

**carpal tunnel release** /,kɑ:p(ə)l 'tʌn(ə)l rɪ ,li:s/ *noun* an operation to relieve the compression of the median nerve

**carpal tunnel syndrome** /,kɑ:p(ə)l 'tʌn(ə)l ˌsɪndrəʊm/ *noun* a condition, usually affecting women, in which the fingers tingle and hurt at night. It is caused by compression of the median nerve.

**carphology** /kɑ:'fɒlədʒi/ *noun* the action of pulling at the bedclothes, a sign of delirium in typhoid and other fevers. Also called **floccitation**

**carpo-** /kɑ:pəʊ/ *prefix* referring to the wrist

**carpometa**  
**carpal joint** /,kɑ:pəmetə 'kɑ:p(ə)l dʒɔɪnt/ *noun* one of the joints between the carpals and metacarpals. Also called **CM joint**

**carpopedal spasm** /,kɑ:pəpi:d(ə)l 'spæz(ə)m/ *noun* a spasm in the hands and feet caused by lack of calcium

**carpus** /'kɑ:pəs/ *noun* the bones by which the lower arm is connected to the hand. Also called **wrist**. See illustration at **HAND** in Supplement (NOTE: The plural is **carpi**.)

**carrier** /'kæriə/ *noun* **1.** a person who carries bacteria of a disease in his or her body and who can transmit the disease to others without showing any signs of being infected with it ○ *Ten per cent of the population are believed to be unwitting carriers of the bacteria.* **2.** an insect which carries disease and infects humans **3.** a healthy person who carries a chromosome variation that gives rise to a hereditary disease such as haemophilia or Duchenne muscular dystrophy

**cartilage** /'kɑ:tɪlɪdʒ/ *noun* thick connective tissue which lines and cushions the joints and which forms part of the structure of an organ. Cartilage in small children is the first stage in the formation of bones.

**cartilaginous** /,kɑ:tɪ'lædʒɪnəs/ *adjective* made of cartilage

**cartilaginous joint** /,kɑ:tɪ'lædʒɪnəs dʒɔɪnt/ *noun* **1. primary cartilaginous joint** same as **synchondrosis** **2. secondary cartilaginous joint** same as **symphysis**

**caruncle** /kə'ʌŋkəl/ *noun* a small swelling

**cascara** /kæ'skɑ:rə/, **cascara sagrada** /kæ 'skɑ:rə sə'grɑ:də/ *noun* a laxative made from the bark of a tropical tree

**case** /keɪs/ *noun* a single occurrence of a disease ○ *There were two hundred cases of cholera in the recent outbreak.*

**caseation** /,keɪsi'eɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the process by which dead tissue decays into a firm and dry mass. It is characteristic of tuberculosis.

**case control study** /keɪs kən'trəʊl ˌstʌdi/ *noun* an investigation in which a group of patients with a disease are compared with a group without the disease in order to study possible causes

**case history** /'keɪs ˌhɪst(ə)rɪ/ *noun* details of what has happened to a patient undergoing treatment

**casein** /'keɪsɪn/ *noun* one of the proteins found in milk

**caseinogen** /,keɪsi'ɪnədʒən/ *noun* the main protein in milk, from which casein is formed

**Casey's model** /'keɪsɪz ˌmbd(ə)l/ *noun* a model for the care of child patients, where the parents are involved in the treatment

**castor oil** /,kɑ:stə 'ɔɪl/ *noun* a plant oil which acts as a laxative

**castration** /kæ'streɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the surgical removal of the sexual organs, usually the testicles, in males

**casualty** /'kæʒuəlti/ *noun* **1.** a person who has had an accident or who is suddenly ill ○ *The fire caused several casualties.* ○ *The casualties were taken by ambulance to the nearest hospital.* **2.** also **casualty department** same as **accident and emergency department** ○ *The accident victim was rushed to casualty.*

**casualty ward** /'kæʒuəlti wɔ:d/ *noun* same as **accident ward**

**CAT** /kæt/ *noun* same as **computerised axial tomography**

**cata-** /kætə/ *prefix* downwards

**catabolic** /,kætə'bɒlɪk/ *adjective* referring to catabolism

**catabolism** /kə'tæbəlɪz(ə)m/ *noun* the process of breaking down complex chemicals into simple chemicals

**catalase** /'kætəleɪz/ *noun* an enzyme present in the blood and liver which catalyses the breakdown of hydrogen peroxide into water and oxygen

**catalepsy** /'kætəlepsi/ *noun* a condition often associated with schizophrenia, where a person becomes incapable of sensation, the body is rigid and he or she does not move for long periods

**catalyse** /'kætəlaɪz/ *verb* to act as a catalyst and help make a chemical reaction take place (NOTE: The US spelling is **catalyze**.)

**catalyst** /'kætəlaɪst/ *noun* a substance which produces or helps a chemical reaction without itself changing ○ *an enzyme which acts as a catalyst in the digestive process*

**catalytic** /,kætə'tɪtɪk/ *adjective* referring to catalysis

**catamenia** /,kætə'mɪ:nɪə/ *noun* menstruation (*technical*)

**cataplexy** /'kætəpleksi/ *noun* a condition in which a person's muscles become suddenly rigid and he or she falls without losing consciousness, possibly caused by a shock

**cataract** /'kætərəkt/ *noun* a condition in which the lens of the eye gradually becomes hard and opaque

**cataractous lens** /,kætə'ræktəs ˌlenz/ *noun* a lens on which a cataract has formed

**catarrh** /kə'tɑ:/ *noun* inflammation of the mucous membranes in the nose and throat, creating an excessive amount of mucus

**catatonia** /,kætə'təʊniə/ *noun* a condition in which a psychiatric patient is either motionless or shows violent reactions to stimulation

**catatonic** /,kætə'tɒnik/ *adjective* referring to behaviour in which a person is either motionless or extremely violent

**catchment area** /'kætʃmənt ,eəriə/ *noun* an area around a hospital which is served by that hospital

**catecholamines** /kætə'kɒləmi:nz/ *plural noun* the hormones adrenaline and noradrenaline which are released by the adrenal glands

**catgut** /'kætɡʌt/ *noun* a thread made from part of the intestines of sheep, now usually artificially hardened, used to sew up cuts made during surgery

**catharsis** /kə'thɑ:sɪs/ *noun* purgation of the bowels

**cathartic** /kə'thɑ:tɪk/ *adjective* laxative or purgative

**catheter** /'kæθətə/ *noun* a tube passed into the body along one of the passages in the body

**catheterisation** /,kæθətərəɪ'zeɪʃ(ə)n/, **catheterization** *noun* the act of putting a catheter into a patient's body

**CAT scan** /'kæt skæn/, **CT scan** /,si: 'ti: skæn/ *noun* same as **CT scan**

**cat-scratch disease** /'kæt skrætʃ dɪ,zɪ:z/, **cat-scratch fever** /'kæt skrætʃ ,fɪ:vəl/ *noun* an illness in which the patient has a fever and swollen lymph glands, thought to be caused by a bacterium transmitted to humans by the scratch of a cat. It may also result from scratching with other sharp points.

**cauda equina** /,kɔ:də 'kwaɪnə/ *noun* a group of nerves which go from the spinal cord to the lumbar region and the coccyx

**caudal** /'kɔ:d(ə)l/ *adjective* (in humans) referring to the cauda equina

**caudal anaesthetic** /,kɔ:d(ə)l ,ænəs'thetɪk/ *noun* an anaesthetic, injected into the base of the spine to remove feeling in the lower part of the body. It is often used in childbirth.

**caudal analgesia** /,kɔ:d(ə)l ,æn(ə)'dʒi:ziə/ *noun* a method of pain relief that involves injecting an anaesthetic into the base of the spine to remove feeling in the lower part of the body

**caul** /kɔ:l/ *noun* 1. a membrane which sometimes covers a baby's head at birth 2. same as **omentum**

**causalgia** /kɔ:'zældʒə/ *noun* burning pain in a limb, caused by a damaged nerve

**causal organism** /,kɔ:z(ə)l 'ɔ:gənɪz(ə)m/ *noun* an organism that causes a particular disease

**caustic** /'kɔ:stɪk/ *noun* a chemical substance that destroys tissues that it touches ■ *adjective* corrosive and destructive

**cauterisation** /,kɔ:tərəɪ'zeɪʃ(ə)n/, **cauterization** *noun* the act of cauterising ○ *The growth was removed by cauterisation.*

**cauterise** /'kɔ:tərəɪz/, **cauterize** *verb* to use burning, radiation or laser beams to remove tissue or to stop bleeding

**cautery** /'kɔ:təri/ *noun* a surgical instrument used to cauterise a wound

**cavernous** /'kævənəs/ *adjective* hollow

**cavitation** /,kævɪ'teɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the forming of a cavity

**cavity** /'kævɪti/ *noun* a hole or space inside the body

**cc** *abbreviation* cubic centimetre

**CCU** *abbreviation* coronary care unit

**CD4** /,si: di: 'fɔ:/ *noun* a compound consisting of a protein combined with a carbohydrate which is found in some cells and helps to protect the body against infection □ **CD4 count** a test used to monitor how many CD4 cells have been destroyed in people with HIV

**CDH** *abbreviation* congenital dislocation of the hip

**cefaclor** /'sefæklo:/ *noun* an antibacterial drug used to treat septicaemia

**cefotaxime** /,sefə'tæksi:m/ *noun* a synthetic cephalosporin used to treat bacterial infection by pseudomonads

**-cele** /si:l/ *suffix* referring to a swelling

**cell** /sel/ *noun* a tiny unit of matter which is the base of all plant and animal tissue (NOTE: For other terms referring to cells, see words beginning with **cyt-**, **cyto-**.)

**cellular** /'seljʊlə/ *adjective* 1. referring to cells, or formed of cells 2. made of many similar parts connected together

**cellulite** /'seljʊlaɪt/ *noun* lumpy deposits of subcutaneous fat, especially in the thighs and buttocks

**cellulitis** /,seljʊ'laɪtɪs/ *noun* a usually bacterial inflammation of connective tissue or of the subcutaneous tissue

**cellulose** /'seljʊləʊs/ *noun* a carbohydrate which makes up a large percentage of plant matter

**Celsius** /'selsɪəs/ *noun* a metric scale of temperature on which 0° is the point at which water freezes and 100° is the point at which water boils under average atmospheric conditions. Also called **centigrade**. † **Fahrenheit** (NOTE: It is usually written as a **C** after the degree sign: 52°C (say: 'fifty-two degrees Celsius).) [Described 1742. After Anders Celsius (1701–44), Swedish astronomer and scientist.]

**Celsius temperature** /'selsɪəs ,temprɪtʃə/ *noun* temperature as measured on the Celsius scale

**CEMACH** /'si:mæʃ/ *noun* a UK research project investigating the causes of infant deaths and still-

births. Full form **Confidential Enquiry into Maternal and Child Health**

**cement** /sɪ'ment/ *noun* 1. an adhesive used in dentistry to attach a crown to the base of a tooth 2. same as **cementum**

**cementum** /sɪ'mentəm/ *noun* a layer of thick hard material which covers the roots of teeth

**census** /'sensəs/ *noun* a systematic count or survey

**-centesis** /senti:'sɪs/ *suffix* puncture

**centi-** /senti/ *prefix* one hundredth ( $10^{-2}$ ). Symbol **c**

**centigrade** /'sentɪɡreɪd/ *noun* same as **Celsius**

**centile chart** /'sentail tʃɑ:t/ *noun* a chart showing the number of babies who fall into each percentage category, as regards, e.g., birth weight

**centilitre** /'sentɪlɪtə/ *noun* a unit of measurement of liquid equal to one hundredth of a litre. Symbol **cl**

**centimetre** /'sentɪmi:tə/ *noun* a unit of measurement of length equal to one hundredth of a metre. Symbol **cm**

**central** /'sentrəl/ *adjective* referring to the centre

**central line** /'sentrəl laɪn/ *noun* a catheter inserted through the neck, used to monitor central venous pressure in conditions such as shock where fluid balance is severely upset

**central nervous system** /,sentrəl 'nɜ:vəs ,sɪstəm/ *noun* the brain and spinal cord which link together all the nerves

**central temperature** /,sentrəl 'tempɪtʃə/ *noun* the temperature of the brain, thorax and abdomen, which is constant

**central venous pressure** /,sentrəl 'vɪ:nəs ,preʃə/ *noun* blood pressure in the right atrium of the heart, which can be measured by means of a catheter

**centrifugal** /,sentrɪ'fju:g(ə)l, sen'trɪfju:g(ə)l/ *adjective* moving away from the centre

**centrifugation** /,sentrɪfju:'geɪʃ(ə)n/, **centrifuging** /'sentrɪfju:dʒɪŋ/ *noun* the process of separating the components of a liquid in a centrifuge

**centrifuge** /'sentrɪfju:dʒ/ *noun* a device to separate the components of a liquid by rapid spinning

**centriole** /'sentriəl/ *noun* a small structure found in the cytoplasm of a cell, which involved in forming the spindle during cell division

**centripetal** /,sentrɪ'pɪt(ə)l, sen'trɪpɪt(ə)l/ *adjective* moving towards the centre

**centromere** /'sentrəmɪəl/ *noun* a constricted part of a chromosome, seen as a cell divides

**centrosome** /'sentrəsəʊm/ *noun* the structure in the cytoplasm of a cell, near the nucleus, and containing the centrioles

**centrum** /'sentrəm/ *noun* the central part of an organ (NOTE: The plural is **centra**.)

**cephal-** /sefəl/ *prefix* same as **cephalo-** (used before vowels)

**cephalgia** /,sefə'lældʒə/ *noun* same as **headache**

**cephalexin** /,sefə'leksɪn/ *noun* an antibiotic used to treat infections of the urinary system or respiratory tract

**cephalhaematoma** /,sefəlhi:mə'təʊmə/ *noun* a swelling found mainly on the head of babies delivered with forceps

**cephalic** /sə'fæɪlɪk/ *adjective* referring to the head

**cephalo-** /sefələʊ/ *prefix* referring to the head

**cephalocoele** /'sefələʊsi:l/ *noun* a swelling caused by part of the brain passing through a weak point in the bones of the skull

**cephalogram** /'sefələʊgræm/ *noun* an X-ray photograph of the bones of the skull

**cephalometry** /,sefə'lɒmɪtri/ *noun* measurement of the head

**cephalopelvic disproportion** /,sefələʊ ,pelvɪk ,dɪsprə'pɔ:ʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a condition in which the pelvic opening of the mother is not large enough for the head of the fetus

**cephalosporin** /,sefələʊ'spɔ:rɪn/ *noun* a drug used in the treatment of bacterial infection

**cephradine** /'sefrædi:n/ *noun* an antibacterial drug used to treat sinusitis and urinary tract infections

**cerclage** /sɜ:'kleɪʒ/ *noun* the act of tying things together with a ring

**cerebellar** /,serə'belə/ *adjective* referring to the cerebellum

**cerebellar cortex** /,serəbelə 'kɔ:teks/ *noun* the outer covering of grey matter which covers the cerebellum

**cerebellum** /,serə'beləm/ *noun* a section of the hindbrain, located at the back of the head beneath the back part of the cerebrum. See illustration at **BRAIN** in Supplement

**cerebr-** /serəbr/ *prefix* same as **cerebro-** (used before vowels)

**cerebral** /'serəbrəl/ *adjective* referring to the cerebrum or to the brain in general

**cerebral dominance** /,serəbrəl 'dɒmɪnəns/ *noun* the usual condition where the centres for various functions are located in one cerebral hemisphere

**cerebral haemorrhage** /,serəbrəl 'hem(ə)rɪdʒ/ *noun* bleeding inside the brain from a cerebral artery. Also called **brain haemorrhage**

**cerebral infarction** /,serəbrəl ɪn'fɑ:kʃən/ *noun* the death of brain tissue as a result of reduction in the blood supply to the brain

**cerebral ischaemia** /,serəbrəl ɪ'ski:miə/ *noun* failure in the blood supply to the brain

**cerebral palsy** /,serəbrəl 'pɔ:lzi/ *noun* a disorder mainly due to brain damage occurring before birth, or due to lack of oxygen during birth, associated with poor coordination of muscular movements, impaired speech, hearing and sight, and sometimes mental impairment (NOTE: Premature babies are at higher risk.)

**cerebral peduncle** /,serəbrəl pɪ'dʌŋk(ə)/ *noun* a mass of nerve fibres connecting the cerebral hemispheres to the midbrain. See illustration at **BRAIN** in Supplement

**cerebral thrombosis** /,serəbrəl θrɒm 'bəʊsɪs/ *noun* same as **cerebrovascular accident**

**celebration** /,serə'breɪf(ə)n/ *noun* brain activity

**cerebro-** /serəbrəʊ/ *prefix* referring to the cerebrum

**cerebrospinal** /,serəbrəʊ'spaɪn(ə)/ *adjective* referring to the brain and the spinal cord

**cerebrospinal fever** /,serəbrəʊ'spaɪn(ə)l 'fi:vəl/ *noun* same as **meningococcal meningitis**

**cerebrospinal fluid** /,serəbrəʊ'spaɪn(ə)l 'flu:ɪd/ *noun* fluid which surrounds the brain and the spinal cord. Abbreviation **CSF**

COMMENT: CSF is found in the space between the arachnoid mater and pia mater of the brain, within the ventricles of the brain and in the central canal of the spinal cord. It consists mainly of water, with some sugar and sodium chloride. Its function is to cushion the brain and spinal cord and it is continually formed and absorbed to maintain the correct pressure.

**cerebrovascular** /,serəbrəʊ'væskjʊlə/ *adjective* referring to the blood vessels in the brain

**cerebrovascular accident** /,serəbrəʊ'væskjʊlə'æksɪd(ə)nt/ *noun* a sudden blocking of or bleeding from a blood vessel in the brain resulting in temporary or permanent paralysis or death. Also called **stroke**

**cerebrum** /sə'ri:brəm/ *noun* the largest part of the brain, formed of two sections, the cerebral hemispheres, which run along the length of the head. The cerebrum controls the main mental processes, including the memory. Also called **telencephalon**

**cerumen** /sə'ru:men/ *noun* wax which forms inside the ear. Also called **earwax**

**ceruminous gland** /sə'ru:mi:nəs ɡlænd/ *noun* a gland which secretes earwax. See illustration at **EAR** in Supplement

**cervic-** /sɜ:vɪk/ *prefix* same as **cervico-** (used before vowels)

**cervical** /'sɜ:vɪk(ə)l, sə'vaɪk(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to the neck

**cervical canal** /,sɜ:vɪk(ə)l kə'næl/ *noun* a tube running through the cervix, from the point where the uterus joins the vagina to the entrance of the uterine cavity. Also called **cervicouterine canal**

**cervical cancer** /,sɜ:vɪk(ə)l 'kænsəl/ *noun* a cancer of the cervix of the uterus

**cervical collar** /,sɜ:vɪk(ə)l 'kɒlə/ *noun* a special strong orthopaedic collar to support the head of a person with neck injuries or a condition such as cervical spondylosis

**cervical erosion** /,sɜ:vɪk(ə)l ɪ'rəʊz(ə)n/ *noun* a condition in which the epithelium of the mucous membrane lining the cervix uteri extends outside the cervix

**cervical ganglion** /,sɜ:vɪk(ə)l 'gæŋɡliən/ *noun* one of the bundles of nerves in the neck

**cervical incompetence** /,sɜ:vɪk(ə)l 'ɪnkɒmpɪt(ə)ns/ *noun* a dysfunction of the cervix of the uterus which is often the cause of spontaneous abortions and premature births and can be remedied by Shirodkar's operation

**cervical intraepithelial neoplasia** /,sɜ:vɪk(ə)l ɪntrə'epɪθi:liəl ,ni:əʊ'pleɪzə/ *noun* changes in the cells of the cervix which may lead to cervical cancer. Abbreviation **CIN**

**cervical nerve** /,sɜ:vɪk(ə)l 'nɜ:v/ *noun* spinal nerve in the neck

**cervical node** /,sɜ:vɪk(ə)l 'nɒd/ *noun* lymph node in the neck

**cervical plexus** /,sɜ:vɪk(ə)l 'pleksəs/ *noun* a group of nerves in front of the vertebrae in the neck, which lead to nerves supplying the skin and muscles of the neck, and also the phrenic nerve which controls the diaphragm

**cervical rib** /,sɜ:vɪk(ə)l 'rɪb/ *noun* an extra rib sometimes found attached to the vertebrae above the other ribs and which may cause thoracic outlet syndrome

**cervical smear** /,sɜ:vɪk(ə)l 'smɪə/ *noun* a test for cervical cancer, where cells taken from the mucus in the cervix of the uterus are examined

**cervical spondylosis** /,sɜ:vɪk(ə)l ,sɒndɪ'ləʊsɪs/ *noun* a degenerative change in the neck bones. † **spondylosis**

**cervical vertebrae** /,sɜ:vɪk(ə)l 'vɜ:tɪbrɪ:/ *plural noun* the seven bones which form the neck

**cervicectomy** /,sɜ:vɪ'sektəmi/ *noun* the surgical removal of the cervix uteri

**cervicitis** /,sɜ:vɪ'saɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the cervix uteri

**cervico-** /sɜ:vɪkəʊ/ *prefix* referring to the neck  
**cervicouterine canal** /,sɜ:vɪkəʊ,jʊ:təraɪn kə'næl/ *noun* same as **cervical canal**

**cervix** /'sɜ:vɪks/ *noun 1. any narrow neck of an organ 2. the neck of the uterus, the narrow lower*

part of the uterus leading into the vagina. Also called **cervix uteri**

**CESDI** *abbreviation* Confidential Enquiry into Stillbirths and Deaths in Infancy.  $\diamond$  **CEMACH**

**cesium** /'si:ziəm/ *noun* *US* same as **caesium**

**cetrimide** /'setriːmaɪd/ *noun* a mixture of ammonium compounds, used in disinfectants and antiseptics

**CFT** *abbreviation* complement fixation test

**chafe** /tʃeɪf/ *verb* to rub something, especially to rub against the skin  $\circ$  *The rough cloth of the collar chafed the girl's neck.*

**Chagas' disease** /'ʃɑ:gəs dɪ,zɪ:z/ *noun* a type of sleeping sickness found in South America, transmitted by insect bites which pass trypanosomes into the bloodstream. Children are mainly affected and if untreated the disease can cause fatal heart block in early adult life. [Described 1909. After Carlos Chagas (1879–1934), Brazilian scientist and physician.]

**CHAI** *abbreviation* Commission for Healthcare Audit and Improvement

**chalasia** /tʃə'leɪziə/ *noun* an excessive relaxation of the oesophageal muscles, which causes regurgitation

**chalazion** /kə'leɪziən/ *noun* same as **meibomian cyst**

**chalone** /'keɪləʊn, 'kæləʊn/ *noun* a hormone which stops a secretion, as opposed to those hormones which stimulate secretion

**chancro** /'ʃæŋkə/ *noun* a sore on the lip, penis or eyelid which is the first symptom of syphilis

**chancroid** /'ʃæŋkrɔɪd/ *noun* a venereal sore with a soft base, situated in the groin or on the genitals and caused by the bacterium *Haemophilus ducreyi*. Also called **soft chancre**

**characterise** /'kærɪktəraɪz/, **characterize** *verb* to be a typical or special quality or feature of something or someone  $\circ$  *The disease is characterised by the development of lesions throughout the body.*

**charcoal** /'tʃɑ:kəʊl/ *noun* a highly absorbent substance, formed when wood is burnt in the absence of oxygen, used to relieve diarrhoea or intestinal gas and in cases of poisoning

**Charcot's joint** /,ʃɑ:kəʊz 'dʒɔɪnt/ *noun* a joint which becomes deformed because the patient cannot feel pain in it when the nerves have been damaged by syphilis, diabetes or leprosy [Described 1868. After Jean-Martin Charcot (1825–93), French neurologist.]

**Charcot's triad** /,ʃɑ:kəʊz 'traɪæd/ *noun* three symptoms of multiple sclerosis: rapid eye movement, tremor and scanning speech

**Charnley clamps** /,tʃɑ:nli 'klæmps/ *plural noun* metal clamps fixed to a rod through a bone to hold it tight

**chart** /tʃɑ:t/ *noun* a record of information shown as a series of lines or points on graph paper  $\circ$  *a temperature chart*

**charting** /'tʃɑ:tiŋ/ *noun* the preparation and updating of a hospital patient's chart by nurses and doctors

**CHC** *abbreviation* **1.** child health clinic **2.** community health council

**CHD** *abbreviation* coronary heart disease

**check-up** /'tʃek ʌp/ *noun* a general examination by a doctor or dentist  $\circ$  *She went for a check-up.*  $\circ$  *He had a heart check-up last week.*

**cheek** /tʃi:k/ *noun* **1.** one of two fleshy parts of the face on each side of the nose **2.** either side of the buttocks (*informal*)

**cheekbone** /'tʃi:kbəʊn/ *noun* an arch of bone in the face beneath the cheek which also forms the lower part of the eye socket

**cheil-** /kaɪl/ *prefix* same as **cheilo-** (*used before vowels*)

**cheilitis** /kaɪ'laɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the lips

**cheilo-** /kaɪləʊ/ *prefix* referring to the lips

**cheiloschisis** /,kaɪləʊ'ʃaɪsɪs/ *noun* a double cleft upper lip

**cheilosis** /kaɪ'ləʊsɪs/ *noun* swelling and cracks on the lips and corners of the mouth caused by lack of vitamin B

**cheiro-** /keɪrəʊ/ *prefix* referring to the hand

**cheiropompholyx** /,keɪrəʊ'pɒmfəɪks/ *noun* a disorder of the skin in which tiny blisters appear on the palms of the hand

**chelating agent** /'ki:leɪtɪŋ,eɪdʒənt/ *noun* a chemical compound which can combine with some metals, used as a treatment for metal poisoning

**chemical symbol** /,kemɪk(ə)l 'sɪmbəl/ *noun* letters which represent a chemical substance  $\circ$  *Na is the symbol for sodium.*

**chemistry** /'kemɪstri/ *noun* the study of substances, elements and compounds and their reactions with each other

**chemo** /'ki:məʊ/ *noun* chemotherapy (*informal*)

**chemo-** /keməʊ, ki:məʊ/ *prefix* referring to chemistry

**chemoreceptor** /,ki:məʊrɪ'septə/ *noun* a cell which responds to the presence of a chemical compound by activating a nerve, e.g. a taste bud reacting to food or cells in the carotid body reacting to lowered oxygen and raised carbon dioxide in the blood

**chemosis** /ki:'məʊsɪs/ *noun* swelling of the conjunctiva

**chemotaxis** /,ki:məʊ'tæksɪs/ *noun* the movement of a cell when it is attracted to or repelled by a chemical substance

**chemotherapeutic agent** /,ki:məʊθərə 'pi:ʊ:ti:k ˌeɪdʒənt/ *noun* a chemical substance used to treat a disease

**chemotherapy** /,ki:məʊθərəpi/ *noun* the use of drugs such as antibiotics, painkillers or antiseptic lotions to fight a disease, especially using toxic chemicals to destroy rapidly developing cancer cells

**chest** /tʃest/ *noun* **1.** the upper front part of the body between the neck and stomach. Also called **thorax** **2.** same as **thorax** (NOTE: For other terms referring to the chest, see **pectoral** and words beginning with **steth-**, **thorac-**, **thoraco-**)

**chest pain** /'tʃest peɪn/ *noun* pain in the chest which may be caused by heart disease

**chesty** /'tʃesti/ *adjective* having phlegm in the lungs, or having a tendency to chest complaints

**Cheyne–Stokes respiration** /,tʃeɪn 'stəʊks respɪˌreɪf(ə)n/, **Cheyne–Stokes breathing** /,tʃeɪn 'stəʊks ˌbri:ðɪŋ/ *noun* irregular breathing, usually found in people who are unconscious, with short breaths gradually increasing to deep breaths, then reducing again, until breathing appears to stop

**chiasm** /'kaɪæz(ə)m/, **chiasma** /kaɪ'æzmə/ *noun* ▶ **optic chiasma**

**chickenpox** /'tʃɪkɪn,pɒks/ *noun* an infectious disease of children, with fever and red spots which turn into itchy blisters. Also called **varicella**

**Chief Medical Officer** /tʃi:f 'medɪk(ə)l ˌɒfɪsə/ *noun* in the UK, a government official responsible for all aspects of public health. Abbreviation **CMO**

**Chief Nursing Officer** /tʃi:f 'nɜ:ɪŋ ˌɒfɪsə/ *noun* in the UK, an official appointed by the Department of Health to advise Government Ministers and provide leadership to nurses and midwives. Abbreviation **CNO**

**chilblain** /'tʃɪlbleɪn/ *noun* a condition in which the skin of the fingers, toes, nose or ears becomes red, swollen and itchy because of exposure to cold. Also called **erythema pernio**

**child** /tʃaɪld/ *noun* a young boy or girl. Child is the legal term for a person under 14 years of age. (NOTE: The plural is **children**. For other terms referring to children, see words beginning with **paed-**, **paedo-** or **ped-**, **pedo-**.)

**child abuse** /'tʃaɪld əˌbju:z/ *noun* cruel treatment of a child by an adult, including physical and sexual harm

**childbirth** /'tʃaɪldbɜ:θ/ *noun* the act of giving birth. Also called **parturition**

**child health clinic** /,tʃaɪld 'helθ ˌkɪnɪk/ *noun* a special clinic for checking the health and development of small children under school age. Abbreviation **CHC**

**childminder** /'tʃaɪldmaɪndə/ *noun* somebody who looks after other people's children in his or

her own home, especially when the parents or guardians are working

**child protection** /,tʃaɪld prə'tekʃən/ *noun* the measures taken to avoid abuse, neglect or exploitation of any kind towards children

**children** /'tʃɪldrən/ plural of **child**

**chill** /tʃɪl/ *noun* a short illness causing a feeling of being cold and shivering, usually the sign of the beginning of a fever, of flu or a cold

**Chinese medicine** /,tʃaɪni:z 'med(ə)sɪn/ *noun* a system of diagnosis, treatment and prevention of illness developed in China over many centuries. It uses herbs, minerals and animal products, exercise, massage and acupuncture.

**Chinese restaurant syndrome** /,tʃaɪni:z 'rest(ə)rənt ˌsɪndrəʊm/ *noun* an allergic condition which gives people severe headaches after eating food flavoured with monosodium glutamate (*informal*)

**chiro-** /kaɪrəʊ/ *prefix* referring to the hand

**chiropractist** /kɪ'rɒpədɪst/ *noun* a person who specialises in treatment of minor disorders of the feet

**chiroprody** /kɪ'rɒpədi/ *noun* the study and treatment of minor diseases and disorders of the feet

**chiropractic** /,kaɪrəʊ'præktɪk/ *noun* the treatment and prevention of disorders of the neuromusculoskeletal system by making adjustments primarily to the bones of the spine

**chiropractor** /'kaɪrəʊ,præktə/ *noun* a person who treats musculoskeletal disorders by making adjustments primarily to the bones of the spine

**chiropracty** /'kaɪrəʊ,prækti/ *noun* same as **chiropractic** (*informal*)

**Chlamydia** /klə'mɪdiə/ *noun* a bacterium that causes trachoma and urogenital diseases in humans and psittacosis in birds, which can be transmitted to humans. It is currently a major cause of sexually transmitted disease.

**chloasma** /kləʊ'æzmə/ *noun* the presence of brown spots on the skin from various causes

**chlor-** /klo:ɹ/ *prefix* same as **chloro-** (*used before vowels*)

**chlorambucil** /klo:ɹ'æmbju:sl/ *noun* a drug which is toxic to cells, used in cancer treatment

**chloramphenicol** /,klo:ɹæm'fenɪkəl/ *noun* a powerful antibiotic which sometimes causes the collapse of blood cell production, so is used only for treating life-threatening diseases such as meningitis

**chlordiasepoxide** /,klo:ɹdaɪ,æzi'pɒksaɪd/ *noun* a yellow crystalline powder, used as a tranquilliser and treatment for alcoholism

**chlorhexidine** /klo:ɹ'heksɪdi:n/ *noun* a disinfectant mouthwash

**chlorination** /,klo:ɹɪ'neɪf(ə)n/ *noun* sterilisation by adding chlorine

**chlorine** /'klɔːriːn/ *noun* a powerful greenish gas, used to sterilise water (NOTE: The chemical symbol is **Cl**.)

**chlormethiazole** /,klɔːmɛ'thɔːzəʊl/ *noun* a sedative used in the treatment of people with alcoholism

**chloro-** /klɔːrəʊ/ *prefix* referring to chlorine

**chloroform** /'klɔːrɔːfɔːm/ *noun* a powerful drug formerly used as an anaesthetic

**chloroma** /klɔː'rəʊmə/ *noun* a bone tumour associated with acute leukaemia

**chlorosis** /klɔː'rəʊsɪs/ *noun* a type of severe anaemia due to iron deficiency, affecting mainly young girls

**chlorothiazide** /,klɔːrəʊ'thɔːzɪd/ *noun* a drug which helps the body to produce more urine, used in the treatment of high blood pressure, swelling and heart failure

**chloroxylenol** /,klɔːrəʊ'zɪlənɒl/ *noun* a chemical used as an antimicrobial agent in skin creams and in disinfectants

**chlorpheniramine** /,klɔːfen'aɪrəmiːn/, **chlorpheniramine maleate** /,klɔːfen'aɪrəmiːn'mæliət/ *noun* an antihistamine drug

**chlorpromazine hydrochloride** /klɔː'prɔːməziːn ,haɪdrəʊ'klɔːraɪd/ *noun* a drug used to treat schizophrenia and other psychoses

**chlorpropamide** /klɔː'prɔːpəmaɪd/ *noun* a drug which lowers blood sugar, used in the treatment of diabetes

**chlorthalidone** /klɔː'thælɪdɔːn/ *noun* a diuretic

**choana** /'kəʊənə/ *noun* any opening shaped like a funnel, especially the one leading from the nasal cavity to the pharynx (NOTE: The plural is **choanae**.)

**chocolate cyst** /,tʃɒklət 'sɪst/ *noun* an ovarian cyst containing old brown blood

**chol-** /kɒl/ *prefix* same as **chole-** (used before vowels)

**cholaemia** /kə'liːmiə/ *noun* the presence of an unusual amount of bile in the blood

**cholagogue** /'kɒləgɒɡ/ *noun* a drug which encourages the production of bile

**cholangiocarcinoma** /kə,lændʒɪəʊ,kɑːsɪ'nəʊmə/ *noun* a rare cancer of the cells of the bile ducts

**cholangiography** /kə,lændʒɪ'ɒɡrəfi/ *noun* an X-ray examination of the bile ducts and gall bladder

**cholangiolitis** /kə,lændʒɪəʊ'lɑɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the small bile ducts

**cholangiopancreatography** /kə,lændʒɪəʊ'pæŋkriə'tɒɡrəfi/ *noun* an X-ray examination of the bile ducts and pancreas

**cholangitis** /,kəʊlæn'dʒaɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the bile ducts

**chole-** /kɒli/ *prefix* referring to bile

**cholecalciferol** /,kɒlɪkæ'l'sɪfərɒl/ *noun* a form of vitamin D found naturally in fish-liver oils and egg yolks

**cholecystectomy** /,kɒlɪsɪ'stektəmi/ *noun* the surgical removal of the gall bladder

**cholecystitis** /,kɒlɪsɪ'staɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the gall bladder

**cholecystoduodenostomy** /,kɒlɪsɪstə'djuːədi'nɒstəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to join the gall bladder to the duodenum to allow bile to pass into the intestine when the main bile duct is blocked

**cholecystography** /,kɒlɪsɪ'stɒɡrəfi/ *noun* an X-ray examination of the gall bladder

**cholecystokinin** /,kɒlɪsɪstəʊ'kaɪnɪn/ *noun* a hormone released by cells at the top of the small intestine. It stimulates the gall bladder, making it contract and release bile.

**cholecystotomy** /,kɒlɪsɪ'stɒtəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to make a cut in the gall bladder, usually to remove gallstones

**choledoch-** /kəledəʊk/ *prefix* referring to the common bile duct

**choledocholithiasis** /kə,ledəʊkəlɪ'thɑɪəsɪs/ *noun* same as **cholelithiasis**

**choledocholithotomy** /kə,ledɪkəʊlɪ'thɒtəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to remove a gallstone by cutting into the bile duct

**choledochostomy** /kə,ledəʊ'kɒstəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to make an opening in a bile duct

**choledochotomy** /kəledəʊ'kɒtəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to make a cut in the common bile duct to remove gallstones

**cholelithiasis** /,kɒlɪlɪ'thɑɪəsɪs/ *noun* a condition in which gallstones form in the gall bladder or bile ducts. Also called **choledocholithiasis**

**cholelithotomy** /,kɒlɪlɪ'thɒtəmi/ *noun* the surgical removal of gallstones by cutting into the gall bladder

**cholera** /'kɒlərə/ *noun* a serious bacterial disease spread through food or water which has been infected by *Vibrio cholerae* ○ *A cholera epidemic broke out after the flood.*

**choleresis** /kə'liərəsɪs/ *noun* the production of bile by the liver

**choleric** /,kɒlɪ'retɪk/ *adjective* referring to a substance which increases the production and flow of bile

**cholestasis** /,kɒlɪ'steɪsɪs/ *noun* a condition in which all bile does not pass into the intestine but some remains in the liver and causes jaundice

**cholesteatoma** /kə,lestɪə'təʊmə/ *noun* a cyst containing some cholesterol found in the middle ear and also in the brain

**cholesterol** /kə'lestərɒl/ *noun* a fatty substance found in fats and oils, also produced by the liver and forming an essential part of all cells



**cholesterolaemia** /kəˌlestərəˈleɪmiə/ *noun* a high level of cholesterol in the blood

**cholesterosis** /kəˌlestəˈrəʊsɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the gall bladder with deposits of cholesterol

**cholic acid** /ˌkəʊlɪk ˈæsɪd/ *noun* one of the bile acids

**choline** /ˈkəʊliːn/ *noun* a compound involved in fat metabolism and the precursor for acetylcholine

**cholinergic** /ˌkəʊlɪˈnɜːdʒɪk/ *adjective* referring to a neurone or receptor which responds to acetylcholine

**cholinesterase** /ˌkəʊlɪˈnestəreɪz/ *noun* an enzyme which breaks down a choline ester

**choluria** /kəʊˈljʊəriə/ *noun* same as **biliuria**

**chondr-** /kɒndr/ *prefix* referring to cartilage

**chondritis** /kɒnˈdraɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of a cartilage

**chondroblast** /ˈkɒndrəʊblæst/ *noun* a cell from which cartilage develops in an embryo

**chondrocalcinosis** /ˌkɒndrəʊˌkælsɪˈneʊsɪs/ *noun* a condition in which deposits of calcium phosphate are found in articular cartilage

**chondrocyte** /ˈkɒndrəʊsaɪt/ *noun* a mature cartilage cell

**chondrodysplasia** /ˌkɒndrəʊdɪsˈpleɪziə/ *noun* a hereditary disorder of cartilage which is linked to dwarfism

**chondrodystrophy** /ˌkɒndrəʊˈdɪstrəfi/ *noun* any disorder of cartilage

**chondroma** /kɒnˈdrəʊmə/ *noun* a tumour formed of cartilaginous tissue

**chondromalacia** /ˌkɒndrəʊməˈleɪʃə/ *noun* degeneration of the cartilage of a joint

**chondrosarcoma** /ˌkɒndrəʊsɑːˈkəʊmə/ *noun* a malignant, rapidly growing tumour involving cartilage cells

**chorda** /ˈkɔːdə/ *noun* a cord or tendon (NOTE: The plural is **chordae**.)

**chordee** /ˈkɔːdiː/ *noun* a painful condition where the erect penis is curved, a complication of gonorrhoea

**chorditis** /kɔːˈdaɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the vocal cords

**chordotomy** /kɔːˈdɒtəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to cut a cord such as a nerve pathway in the spinal cord in order to relieve intractable pain

**chorea** /kɔːˈriːə/ *noun* a sudden severe twitching, usually of the face and shoulders, which is a symptom of disease of the nervous system

**chorion** /ˈkɔːrɪən/ *noun* a membrane covering the fertilised ovum

**chorionic** /ˌkɔːrɪˈɒnɪk/ *adjective* referring to the chorion

**chorionic gonadotrophin** /kɔːrɪˈɒnɪk ˌɡəʊnədəʊˈtrəʊfɪn/ *noun* ♦ **human chorionic gonadotrophin**

**chorionic villi** /kɔːrɪˈɒnɪk ˈvɪləɪ/ *plural noun* tiny finger-like folds in the chorion

**chorionic villus sampling** /kɔːrɪˈɒnɪk ˈvɪləs ˌsɑːmplɪŋ/ *noun* an antenatal screening test carried out by examining cells from the chorionic villi of the outer membrane surrounding an embryo, which have the same DNA as the fetus

**choroid** /ˈkɔːrɔɪd/ *noun* the middle layer of tissue which forms the eyeball, between the sclera and the retina. See illustration at **EYE** in Supplement

**choroiditis** /ˌkɔːrɔɪˈdaɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the choroid in the eyeball

**choroidocyclitis** /kɔːˌrɔɪdəʊsɑɪˈklaɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the choroids and ciliary body

**Christmas disease** /ˈkrɪsməs dɪˌzɪːz/ *noun* same as **haemophilia B** [After Mr Christmas, the person in whom the disease was first studied in detail.]

**Christmas factor** /ˈkrɪsməs ˌfæktə/ *noun* same as **Factor IX**

**chrom-** /krəʊm/ *prefix* same as **chromo-** (used before vowels)

**-chromasia** /krəmeɪziə/ *suffix* referring to colour

**chromatid** /ˈkrəʊmətɪd/ *noun* one of two parallel filaments making up a chromosome

**chromatin** /ˈkrəʊmətɪn/ *noun* a network which forms the nucleus of a cell and can be stained with basic dyes

**chromatography** /ˌkrəʊməˈtɒɡrəfi/ *noun* a method of separating chemicals through a porous medium, used in analysing compounds and mixtures

**chromatophore** /krəʊˈmætəfɔː/ *noun* any pigment-bearing cell in the eyes, hair and skin

**chromic acid** /ˌkrəʊmɪk ˈæsɪd/ *noun* an unstable acid existing only in solution or in the form of a salt, sometimes used in the removal of warts

**chromicised catgut** /ˌkrəʊmɪsaɪzd ˈkætɡʌt/ *noun* catgut which is hardened with chromium to make it slower to dissolve in the body

**chromium** /ˈkrəʊmiəm/ *noun* a metallic trace element (NOTE: The chemical symbol is **Cr**.)

**chromo-** /krəʊməʊ/ *prefix* referring to colour

**chromosomal** /ˌkrəʊməsəʊm(ə)/ *adjective* referring to chromosomes

**chromosome** /ˈkrəʊməsəʊm/ *noun* a rod-shaped structure in the nucleus of a cell, formed of DNA, which carries the genes

**chromosome mapping** /ˈkrəʊməsəʊm ˌmæpɪŋ/ *noun* a procedure by which the position of genes on a chromosome is established

**chronic** /ˈkrɒnɪk/ *adjective* **1.** referring to a disease or condition which lasts for a long time ○ *He has a chronic chest complaint.* Opposite **acute** **2.** referring to serious pain (*informal*)

**chronic abscess** /ˌkrɒnɪk ˈæbsɛs/ *noun* an abscess which develops slowly over a period of time

**chronic appendicitis** /ˌkrɒnɪk əˈpendɪ ˈsaɪtɪs/ *noun* a condition in which the vermiform appendix is always slightly inflamed. ⚡ **grumbling appendix**

**chronic catarrhal rhinitis** /ˌkrɒnɪk kəˈtʌrəl raɪˈnaɪtɪs/ *noun* a persistent form of inflammation of the nose where excess mucus is secreted by the mucous membrane

**chronic fatigue syndrome** /ˌkrɒnɪk fəˈtɪːɡ ˌsɪndrəʊm/ *noun* same as **myalgic encephalomyelitis**

**chronic granulomatous disease** /ˌkrɒnɪk ˌgrænjuˈləʊmətəs dɪˌziːz/ *noun* a type of inflammation where macrophages are converted into epithelial-like cells as a result of infection, as in tuberculosis or sarcoidosis

**chronic obstructive airways disease** /ˌkrɒnɪk əbˌstrʌktɪv ˈeəweɪz dɪˌziːz/ *noun* abbreviation **COAD**. Now called **chronic obstructive pulmonary disease**

**chronic obstructive pulmonary disease** /ˌkrɒnɪk əbˌstrʌktɪv ˈpʌlmən(ə)rɪ dɪˌziːz/ *noun* any of a group of progressive respiratory disorders where someone experiences loss of lung function and shows little or no response to steroid or bronchodilator drug treatments, e.g. emphysema and chronic bronchitis. Abbreviation **COPD**

**chronic pancreatitis** /ˌkrɒnɪk pæŋkrɪə ˈtaɪtɪs/ *noun* a persistent inflammation occurring after repeated attacks of acute pancreatitis, where the gland becomes calcified

**chronic peri-arthritis** /ˌkrɒnɪk perɪəˈθraɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of tissues round the shoulder joint. Also called **scapulohumeral arthritis**

**chronic pericarditis** /ˌkrɒnɪk pərɪkəˈdaɪtɪs/ *noun* a condition in which the pericardium becomes thickened and prevents the heart from functioning normally. Also called **constrictive pericarditis**

**Chronic Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970** /krɒnɪk ˌsɪk ən dɪsˌeɪb(ə)ld ˈpɜːs(ə)nz ækt/ *noun* an Act of Parliament in the UK which provides benefits such as alterations to their homes for people with long-term conditions

**chronic toxicity** /ˌkrɒnɪk tɒkˈsɪsɪti/ *noun* exposure to harmful levels of a toxic substance over a period of time

**chrysotherapy** /ˌkraɪsəʊˈθerəpi/ *noun* treatment which involves gold injections

**Chvostek's sign** /tʃəʊˈvnstɛks saɪn/ *noun* an indication of tetany, where a spasm is produced if the facial muscles are tapped

**chyle** /kaɪl/ *noun* a fluid in the lymph vessels in the intestine, which contains fat, especially after a meal

**chylomicron** /ˌkaɪləʊˈmaɪkrɒn/ *noun* a particle of chyle present in the blood

**chyluria** /kaɪˈljʊəriə/ *noun* the presence of chyle in the urine

**chyme** /kaɪm/ *noun* a semi-liquid mass of food and gastric juices, which passes from the stomach to the intestine

**chymotrypsin** /ˌkaɪməʊˈtrɪpsɪn/ *noun* an enzyme which digests protein

**Ci** *abbreviation* curie

**cicatrix** /ˈsɪkətrɪks/ *noun* same as **scar**

**-ciclovir** /sɪkləʊvɪr/ *suffix* used in the names of antiviral drugs

**-cide** /saɪd/ *suffix* referring to killing

**cilia** /ˈsɪliə/ plural of **cilium**

**ciliary** /ˈsɪliəri/ *adjective* referring to cilia

**ciliary body** /ˈsɪliəri ˌbɒdi/ *noun* the part of the eye which connects the iris to the choroid. See illustration at **EYE** in Supplement

**ciliary ganglion** /ˌsɪliəri ˈgæŋɡliən/ *noun* a parasympathetic ganglion in the orbit of the eye, supplying the intrinsic eye muscles

**ciliary muscle** /ˈsɪliəri ˌmʌs(ə)l/ *noun* a muscle which makes the lens of the eye change its shape to focus on objects at different distances. See illustration at **EYE** in Supplement

**ciliary processes** /ˌsɪliəri ˈprəʊsesɪz/ *plural noun* the ridges behind the iris to which the lens of the eye is attached

**ciliated epithelium** /ˌsɪlietɪd epɪˈθiːliəm/ *noun* simple epithelium where the cells have tiny hairs or cilia

**cilium** /ˈsɪliəm/ *noun* **1.** an eyelash **2.** one of many tiny hair-like processes which line cells in passages in the body and by moving backwards and forwards drive particles or fluid along the passage (NOTE: The plural is **cilia**.)

**-cillin** /sɪlɪn/ *suffix* used in the names of penicillin drugs ○ *amoxicillin*

**cimetidine** /sɪˈmetɪdɪn/ *noun* a drug which reduces the production of stomach acid, used in peptic ulcer treatment

**cimex** /ˈsaɪmeks/ *noun* a bedbug or related insect which feeds on birds, humans and other mammals (NOTE: The plural is **cimices**.)

**CIN** *abbreviation* cervical intraepithelial neoplasia

**-cin** /sɪn/ *suffix* referring to aminoglycosides ○ *gentamicin*

**cinematics** /ˌsɪnɪˈmætɪks/ *noun* the science of movement, especially of body movements

**cineplasty** /ˈsɪnɪplæsti/ *noun* an amputation where the muscles of the stump of the amputated limb are used to operate an artificial limb

**cineradiography** /,sɪnɪreɪdɪ'ɒŋrəfi/ *noun* the practice of taking a series of X-ray photographs for diagnosis, or to show how something moves or develops in the body

**cinology** /sɪ,ni:'sɪ'blədʒi/ *noun* the study of muscle movements, particularly in relation to treatment

**cinnarizine** /'sɪnərəzi:n/ *noun* an antihistaminic used to treat Ménière's disease

**ciprofloxacin** /,saɪprəʊ'flɒksəsn/ *noun* a powerful antibiotic used in eye drops to treat corneal ulcers and surface infections of the eye, and in the treatment of anthrax in humans

**circadian** /sɜ:'keɪdɪən/ *adjective* referring to a pattern which is repeated approximately every 24 hours

**circle of Willis** /,sɜ:k(ə)l əv 'wɪlɪs/ *noun* a circle of branching arteries at the base of the brain formed by the basilar artery, the anterior and posterior cerebral arteries, the anterior and posterior communicating arteries and the internal carotid arteries [Described 1664. After Thomas Willis (1621–75), English physician and anatomist.]

**circulatory system** /,sɜ:kjʊ'leɪt(ə)rɪ ,sɪstəm/ *noun* a system of arteries and veins, together with the heart, which makes the blood circulate around the body

**circum-** /sɜ:kəm/ *prefix* around

**circumcision** /,sɜ:kəm'sɪʒ(ə)n/ *noun* the surgical removal of the foreskin of the penis

**circumduction** /,sɜ:kəm'dʌkʃən/ *noun* the action of moving a limb so that the end of it makes a circular motion

**circumflex** /'sɜ:kəm'fleks/ *adjective* bent or curved

**circumoral** /,sɜ:kəm'ɔ:rəl/ *adjective* referring to rashes surrounding the lips

**circumvallate papillae** /sɜ:kəm,væleɪt pə 'pɪli:/ *plural noun* large papillae at the base of the tongue, which have taste buds

**cirrhosis** /sə'rʌsɪs/ *noun* a progressive disease of the liver, often associated with alcoholism, in which healthy cells are replaced by scar tissue

**cirrhotic** /sɪ'rɒtɪk/ *adjective* referring to cirrhosis ○ *The patient had a cirrhotic liver.*

**cirs-** /sɜ:s/ *prefix* referring to dilation

**cirroid** /'sɜ:sɔɪd/ *adjective* referring to a varicose vein which is dilated

**cisplatin** /sɪs'pleɪtɪn/ *noun* a chemical substance which may help fight cancer by binding to DNA. It is used in the treatment of ovarian and testicular cancer.

**cistern** /'sɪstən/, **cisterna** /sɪ'stɜ:nə/ *noun* a space containing fluid

**citric acid** /,sɪtrɪk 'æsɪd/ *noun* an acid found in fruit such as oranges, lemons and grapefruit

**citric acid cycle** /,sɪtrɪk 'æsɪd ,saɪk(ə)l/ *noun* an important series of events concerning amino

acid metabolism, which takes place in the mitochondria in the cell. Also called **Krebs cycle**

**citruiline** /'sɪtrʊlɪ:n, 'sɪtrʊlɪn/ *noun* an amino acid

**CJD** *abbreviation* Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease

**cl** *abbreviation* centilitre

**clamp** /klæmp/ *noun* a surgical instrument to hold something tightly, e.g. a blood vessel during an operation ■ *verb* to hold something tightly

**clap** /klæp/ *noun* same as **gonorrhoea** (*slang*)

**classification** /,klæsɪfɪ'keɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the work of putting references or components into order so as to be able to refer to them again and identify them easily ○ *the ABO classification of blood*

**claudication** /,klɔ:drɪ'keɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the fact of limping or being lame

**claustrophobia** /,klɔ:stɹə'fəʊbiə/ *noun* a fear of enclosed spaces or crowded rooms. Compare **agoraphobia**

**claustrophobic** /,klɔ:stɹə'fəʊbɪk/ *adjective* afraid of being in enclosed spaces or crowded rooms. Compare **agoraphobic**

**clavicle** /'klævɪk(ə)l/ *noun* same as **collarbone**

**clavicular** /klə'vɪkjʊlə/ *adjective* referring to the clavicle

**clavus** /'kleɪvəs/ *noun* **1.** a corn on the foot **2.** severe pain in the head, like a nail being driven in

**claw foot** /,klɔ: 'fʊt/ *noun* a deformed foot with the toes curved towards the instep and with a very high arch. Also called **pes cavus**

**claw hand** /,klɔ: 'hænd/ *noun* a deformed hand with the fingers, especially the ring finger and little finger, bent towards the palm, caused by paralysis of the muscles

**clean** /kli:n/ *adjective* **1.** free from dirt, waste products or unwanted substances **2.** sterile or free from infection ○ *a clean dressing* ○ *a clean wound* **3.** not using recreational drugs

**cleavage** /'kli:vɪdʒ/ *noun* the repeated division of cells in an embryo

**cleavage lines** /'kli:vɪdʒ ,laɪnz/ *plural noun* same as **Langer's lines**

**cleft** /kleft/ *noun* a small opening or hollow place in a surface or body part ■ *adjective* referring to a surface or body part which has separated into two or more sections

**cleft foot** /,kleft 'fʊt/ *noun* same as **talipes**

**cleft lip** /,kleft 'lɪp/ *noun* a congenital condition in which the upper lip fails to form in the usual way during fetal development. Also called **hare-lip**

**cleft palate** /,kleft 'pælət/ *noun* a congenital condition in which the palate does not fuse during fetal development, causing a gap between the mouth and nasal cavity in severe cases

**cleido-** /klaɪdəʊ/ *prefix* referring to the clavicle

**cleidocranial dysostosis** /,klaɪdəʊkreɪniəl ,dɪsɒs'təʊsɪs/ *noun* a hereditary bone malformation, with protruding jaw, lack of collarbone and malformed teeth

**client** /'klaɪənt/ *noun* a person visited by a health visitor or social worker

**climacteric** /klaɪ'mæktərɪk/ *noun* a period of diminished sexual activity in a man who reaches middle age

**climax** /'klaɪmæks/ *noun* **1.** an orgasm **2.** the point where a disease is at its worst ■ *verb* to have an orgasm

**clindamycin** /,klaɪndə'maɪsɪn/ *noun* a powerful antibiotic used to treat severe infections and acne

**clinic** /'klaɪnɪk/ *noun* **1.** a small hospital or a department in a large hospital which deals only with out-patients or which specialises in the treatment of particular medical conditions ○ *He is being treated in a private clinic.* ○ *She was referred to an antenatal clinic.* **2.** a group of students under a doctor or surgeon who examine patients and discuss their treatment

**clinical** /'klaɪnɪk(ə)/ *adjective* **1.** referring to the physical assessment and treatment of patients by doctors, as opposed to a surgical operation, a laboratory test or experiment **2.** referring to instruction given to students at the bedside of patients as opposed to class instruction with no patient present **3.** referring to a clinic

**clinical audit** /,klaɪnɪk(ə)l 'ɔ:ɪt/ *noun* an evaluation of the standard of clinical care

**clinical care** /,klaɪnɪk(ə)l 'keə/ *noun* the care and treatment of patients in hospital wards or in doctors' surgeries

**clinical effectiveness** /,klaɪnɪk(ə)l ɪ 'fektɪv nəʊs/ *noun* the ability of a procedure or treatment to achieve the desired result

**clinical governance** /,klaɪnɪk(ə)l 'gʌv(ə)nəns/ *noun* the responsibility given to doctors to coordinate audit, research, education, use of guidelines and risk management to develop a strategy to raise the quality of medical care

**Clinical Management Plan** /,klaɪnɪk(ə)l 'mæɪnɪdʒmənt ,plæn/ *noun* a comprehensive statement of a patient's condition that details what medicines and treatments may be used in ongoing care, forming part of the patient's records

**clinical medicine** /,klaɪnɪk(ə)l 'med(ə)s(ə)n/ *noun* the study and treatment of patients in a hospital ward or in the doctor's surgery, as opposed to in the operating theatre or laboratory

**clinical nurse manager** /,klaɪnɪk(ə)l 'nɜ:s ,mæɪnɪdʒə/ *noun* the administrative manager of the clinical nursing staff of a hospital

**clinical nurse specialist** /,klaɪnɪk(ə)l nɜ:s 'speʃ(ə)lɪst/ *noun* a nurse who specialises in a particular branch of clinical care

**clinical pathology** /,klaɪnɪk(ə)l pə'θɒlədʒi/ *noun* the study of disease as applied to the treatment of patients

**clinical psychologist** /,klaɪnɪk(ə)l saɪ 'kɒlədʒɪst/ *noun* a psychologist who studies and treats sick patients in hospital

**clinical trial** /,klaɪnɪk(ə)l 'traɪəl/ *noun* a trial carried out in a medical laboratory on a person or on tissue from a person

**clinician** /klnɪ'nʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a doctor, usually not a surgeon, who has considerable experience in treating patients

**clinodactyly** /,klaɪnəʊ'dæktɪli/ *noun* the permanent bending of a finger to one side

**clip** /kɪp/ *noun* a piece of metal with a spring, used to attach things together

**clitoris** /'kɪlɪtərɪs/ *noun* a small erectile female sex organ, situated at the anterior angle of the vulva, which can be excited by sexual activity. See illustration at **UROGENITAL SYSTEM (FEMALE)** in Supplement

**cloaca** /kloʊ'æɪkə/ *noun* the end part of the hindgut in an embryo

**clomipramine** /kloʊ'mɪprəmi:n/ *noun* a drug used to treat depression, phobias and obsessive-compulsive disorder

**clonazepam** /kloʊ'næzɪpæm/ *noun* a drug used to treat epilepsy

**clone** /kloʊn/ *noun* a group of cells derived from a single cell by asexual reproduction and so identical to the first cell ■ *verb* to reproduce an individual organism by asexual means

**clonic** /'kɒnɪk/ *adjective* referring to clonus

**clonic spasms** /,kɒnɪk 'spæz(ə)mz/ *plural noun* spasms which recur regularly

**clonidine** /'kɒnɪdi:n/ *noun* a drug which relaxes and widens the arteries, used in the treatment of hypertension, migraine headaches and heart failure

**clonus** /'kɒnəs/ *noun* the rhythmic contraction and relaxation of a muscle, usually a sign of upper motor neurone lesions

**closed fracture** /,kloʊzɪd 'fræktʃə/ *noun* same as **simple fracture**

**Clostridium** /kloʊ'strɪdiəm/ *noun* a type of bacteria

**clot** /kɒt/ *noun* a soft mass of coagulated blood in a vein or an artery ○ *The doctor diagnosed a blood clot in the brain.* ○ *Blood clots occur in thrombosis.* ■ *verb* to change from a liquid to a semi-solid state, or to cause a liquid to do this ○ *His blood does not clot easily.* (NOTE: **clotting** – **clotted**)

**clotrimazole** /kloʊ'trɪməzəʊl/ *noun* a drug used to treat yeast and fungal infections

**clotting** /'kɒtɪŋ/ *noun* the action of coagulating

**clotting factors** /,kɒtɪŋ 'fæktəz/ *plural noun* substances in plasma, called Factor I, Factor II,

and so on, which act one after the other to make the blood coagulate when a blood vessel is damaged

COMMENT: Deficiency in one or more of the clotting factors results in haemophilia.

**clubbing** /'klʌbɪŋ/ *noun* a thickening of the ends of the fingers and toes, a sign of many different diseases

**club foot** /,klʌb 'fʊt/ *noun* same as **talipes**

**cluster headache** /'klʌstə ,hedɪk/ *noun* a headache which occurs behind one eye for a short period

**Clutton's joint** /'klʌt(ə)nz ,dʒɔɪnt/ *noun* a swollen knee joint occurring in congenital syphilis [Described 1886. After Henry Hugh Clutton (1850–1909), surgeon at St Thomas's Hospital, London, UK]

**cm** *abbreviation* centimetre

**CMHN** *abbreviation* community mental health nurse

**CM joint** /,si: 'em dʒɔɪnt/ *noun* same as **carpometacarpal joint**

**CMO** *abbreviation* Chief Medical Officer

**CMV** *abbreviation* cytomegalovirus

**C/N** *abbreviation* charge nurse

**CNS** *abbreviation* central nervous system

**coagulant** /kəʊ'æɡjʊlənt/ *noun* a substance which can make blood clot

**coagulase** /kəʊ'æɡjʊleɪz/ *noun* an enzyme produced by a staphylococcal bacteria which makes blood plasma clot

**coagulate** /kəʊ'æɡjʊleɪt/ *verb* to change from liquid to semi-solid, or cause a liquid to do this ○ *His blood does not coagulate easily.* † **clot**

**coagulation** /kəʊ'æɡjʊ'leɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the action of clotting

**coagulum** /kəʊ'æɡjʊləm/ *noun* same as **blood clot** (NOTE: The plural is **coagula**.)

**coalesce** /,kəʊə'les/ *verb* to combine, or to cause things to combine, into a single body or group

**coalescence** /,kəʊə'les(ə)ns/ *noun* the process by which wound edges come together when healing

**coarctation** /,kəʊə:k'teɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the process of narrowing

**coat** /kəʊt/ *noun* a layer of material covering an organ or a cavity ■ *verb* to cover something with something else

**coated tongue** /,kəʊtɪd 'tʌŋ/ *noun* same as **furred tongue**

**cobalt** /'kəʊbɔ:l/ *noun* a metallic element (NOTE: The chemical symbol is **Co**.)

**cocaine** /kəʊ'keɪn/ *noun* a narcotic drug not generally used in medicine because its use leads to addiction, but sometimes used as a surface anaesthetic

**cocci** /'kɒki/ plural of **coccus**

**coccus** /'kɒkəs/ *noun* a bacterium shaped like a ball (NOTE: The plural is **cocci**.)

**coccy-** /kɒksɪ/ *prefix* referring to the coccyx

**coccydynia** /,kɒksɪ'dɪniə/ *noun* a sharp pain in the coccyx, usually caused by a blow. Also called **coccygodynia**

**coccygeal vertebrae** /kɒk,sɪdʒiəl 'vɜ:tɪbreɪ/ *plural noun* the fused bones in the coccyx

**coccyges** /kɒk'saɪdʒi:z/ plural of **coccyx**

**coccygodynia** /,kɒksɪgəʊ'dɪniə/ *noun* same as **coccydynia**

**coccyx** /'kɒksɪks/ *noun* the lowest bone in the backbone (NOTE: The plural is **coccyges**.)

**cochlea** /'kɒkliə/ *noun* a spiral tube inside the inner ear, which is the essential organ of hearing. See illustration at **EAR** in Supplement (NOTE: The plural is **cochleae**.)

**cochlear** /'kɒkliə/ *adjective* referring to the cochlea

**cochlear implant** /,kɒkliə 'ɪmplɑ:nt/ *noun* a type of hearing aid for profound hearing loss

**Cochrane database** /,kɒkrən 'deɪtəbeɪs/ *noun* a database of regular reviews carried out on research

**code** /kəʊd/ *noun* **1.** a system of numbers, letters or symbols used to represent language or information **2.** same as **genetic code** ■ *verb* **1.** to convert instructions or data into another form **2.** (of a *codon* or *gene*) to provide the genetic information which causes a specific amino acid to be produced ○ *Genes are sections of DNA that code for a specific protein sequence.*

**codeine** /'kəʊdɪ:n/, **codeine phosphate** /,kəʊdɪn 'fɒsfet/ *noun* a common painkilling drug that can also be used to suppress coughing and in the treatment of diarrhoea

**code of conduct** /,kəʊd əv 'kɒndʌkt/ *noun* a set of general rules showing how a group of people such as doctors or nurses should work

**cod liver oil** /,kɒd livər 'ɔɪl/ *noun* a fish oil which is rich in calories and vitamins A and D

**-coele** /si:l/ *suffix* referring to a hollow (NOTE: The US spelling is usually **-cele**.)

**coeli-** /si:lɪ/ *prefix* same as **caelio-** (used before vowels) (NOTE: The US spelling is usually **celi-**.)

**coeliac** /'si:liæk/ *adjective* referring to the abdomen

**coeliac artery** /,si:liæk 'ɑ:təri/, **coeliac axis** /,si:liæk 'æksɪs/ *noun* the main artery in the abdomen leading from the abdominal aorta and dividing into the left gastric, hepatic and splenic arteries. Also called **coeliac trunk**

**coeliac disease** /,si:liæk dɪ'zi:z/ *noun* same as **gluten-induced enteropathy**

**coeliac ganglion** /,si:liæk 'gæŋgliən/ *noun* a ganglion on each side of the origins of the diaphragm, connected with the coeliac plexus

**coeliac trunk** /,si:liæk 'trʌŋk/ *noun* same as **coeliac artery**

**coelio-** /si:liəʊ/ *prefix* referring to a hollow, usually the abdomen

**coelioscopy** /,si:li'ɒskəpi/ *noun* an examination of the peritoneal cavity by inflating the abdomen with sterile air and passing an endoscope through the abdominal wall (NOTE: The plural is **coelioscopies**.)

**coffee ground vomit** /'kɒfi graʊnd ,vɒmɪt/ *noun* vomit containing dark pieces of blood, indicating that the person is bleeding from the stomach or upper intestine

**cognition** /kɒg'nɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the mental action or process of gaining knowledge by using your mind or your senses, or knowledge gained in this way

**cognitive** /'kɒgnɪtɪv/ *adjective* referring to the mental processes of perception, memory, judgment and reasoning ○ a *cognitive impairment*

**cognitive disorder** /,kɒgnɪtɪv dɪs'ɔ:ɪdə/ *noun* impairment of any of the mental processes of perception, memory, judgment and reasoning

**cognitive therapy** /,kɒgnɪtɪv 'θerəpi/ *noun* a treatment of psychiatric disorders such as anxiety or depression which encourages people to deal with their negative ways of thinking

**cohort** /'kəʊhɔ:t/ *noun* a group of people sharing a particular characteristic such as age or gender who are studied in a scientific or medical investigation

**cohort study** /'kəʊhɔ:t ,stʌdi/ *noun* an investigation in which a group of people are classified according to their exposure to various risks and studied over a period of time to see if they develop a specific disease, in order to evaluate the links between risk and disease

**coil** /kɔɪl/ *noun* a device fitted into a woman's uterus as a contraceptive

**cold** /kəʊld/ *adjective* not warm or hot ■ *noun* an illness, with inflammation of the nasal passages, in which someone sneezes and coughs and has a blocked and running nose ○ *She had a heavy cold*. Also called **common cold**, **coryza**

**cold burn** /'kəʊld bɜ:n/ *noun* an injury to the skin caused by exposure to extreme cold or by touching a very cold surface

**cold cautery** /,kəʊld 'kɔ:təri/ *noun* the removal of a skin growth using carbon dioxide snow

**cold pack** /'kəʊld pæk/ *noun* a cloth or a pad filled with gel or clay which is chilled and put on the body to reduce or increase the temperature

**cold sore** /'kəʊld sɔ:/ *noun* a painful blister, usually on the lips or nose, caused by herpes simplex Type I

**colectomy** /kə'lektəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to remove the whole or part of the colon (NOTE: The plural is **colectomies**.)

**colic** /'kɒlɪk/ *noun* **1.** pain in any part of the intestinal tract. Also called **enteralgia**, **tormina** **2.** crying and irritability in babies, especially from stomach pains

**coliform bacterium** /,kəʊlɪfɔ:m bækt 'tɪəriəm/ *plural noun* any bacterium which is similar to *Escherichia coli*

**colistin** /kɒ'lɪstɪn/ *noun* an antibiotic which is effective against a wide range of organisms and is used to treat gastrointestinal infections

**colitis** /kə'laitɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the colon. Also called **colonitis**

**collaborative care** /kə,læb(ə)rətɪv 'keə/ *noun* treatment that involves collaboration between different medical departments or agencies, or involves active collaboration between the patient and the providers of treatment

**collagen** /'kɒlədʒən/ *noun* a thick protein fibre forming bundles, which make up the connective tissue, bone and cartilage

**collapse** /kə'læps/ *noun* **1.** a condition in which someone is extremely exhausted or semi-conscious ○ *She was found in a state of collapse*. **2.** a condition in which an organ becomes flat or loses air ○ *lung collapse* ■ *verb* **1.** to fall down in a semi-conscious state ○ *After running to catch his train he collapsed*. **2.** to become flat, or lose air

**collapsed lung** /kə,læpst 'lʌŋ/ *noun* same as **pneumothorax**

**collarbone** /'kɒləbəʊn/ *noun* one of two long thin bones which join the shoulder blades to the breastbone. Also called **clavicle** (NOTE: Collarbone fracture is one of the most frequent fractures in the body.)

**collateral** /kə'læt(ə)rəl/ *adjective* secondary or less important

**Colles' fracture** /'kɒlɪs(ɪz) ,fræktʃə/ *noun* a fracture of the lower end of the radius with displacement of the wrist backwards, usually when someone has stretched out a hand to try to break a fall [After Abraham Colles (1773–1843), Irish surgeon.]

**colliculus** /kə'lɪkjʊləs/ *noun* one of four small projections (**superior colliculi** and **inferior colliculi**) in the midbrain. See illustration at **BRAIN** in Supplement (NOTE: The plural is **colliculi**.)

**collodion** /kə'ləʊdiən/ *noun* a liquid used for painting on a clean wound, where it dries to form a flexible covering

**colloid** /'kɒləɪd/ *noun* **1.** a mass of tiny particles of one substance dispersed in another substance **2.** the particles which are suspended in a colloid solution **3.** a thick jelly-like substance which stores hormones, produced in the thyroid gland ■

*adjective* relating to or resembling a colloid ○ *colloid acne*

**collyrium** /kə'lɪrɪəm/ *noun* a solution used to bathe the eyes (NOTE: The plural is **collyria**.)

**colo-** /kɒləʊ/ *prefix* referring to the colon

**coloboma** /,kɒləʊ'bəʊmə/ *noun* a condition in which part of the eye, especially part of the iris, is missing

**colon** /'kɒləʊn/ *noun* the main part of the large intestine, running from the caecum at the end of the small intestine to the rectum

**colonic** /kə'lɒnɪk/ *adjective* referring to the colon

**colonic irrigation** /kə'lɒnɪk ɪrɪ'geɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the washing out of the contents of the large intestine using a tube inserted in the anus

**colonoscope** /kə'lɒnəskəʊp/ *noun* a surgical instrument for examining the interior of the colon

**colonoscopy** /,kɒlə'nɒskəpi/ *noun* an examination of the inside of the colon, using a colonoscope passed through the rectum (NOTE: The plural is **colonoscopies**.)

**colony** /'kɒləni/ *noun* a group or culture of microorganisms

**colostomy** /kə'lɒstəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to make an opening between the colon and the abdominal wall to allow faeces to be passed out without going through the rectum (NOTE: The plural is **colostomies**.)

**colostomy bag** /kə'lɒstəmi bæɡ/ *noun* a bag attached to the opening made by a colostomy, to collect faeces as they are passed out of the body

**colostrum** /kə'lɒstrəm/ *noun* a fluid rich in antibodies and low in fat, secreted by the mother's breasts at the birth of a baby, before the true milk starts to flow

**colour blindness** /'kʌlə ˌblaɪndnəs/ *noun* a condition of being unable to tell the difference between specific colours

**colour index** /'kʌlə ˌɪndeks/ *noun* the ratio between the amount of haemoglobin and the number of red blood cells in a specific amount of blood

**colp-** /kɒlp/ *prefix* same as **colpo-** (used before vowels)

**colpo-** /kɒlpəʊ/ *prefix* referring to the vagina

**colpocystitis** /,kɒlpəʊsɪ'taɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of both the vagina and the urinary bladder

**colpohysterectomy** /,kɒlpəʊhɪstə'rektəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation in which the womb is removed through the vagina (NOTE: The plural is **colpohysterectomies**.)

**colpopexy** /'kɒlpəpeksi/ *noun* a surgical operation to fix a prolapsed vagina to the abdominal wall (NOTE: The plural is **colpopexies**.)

**colpoplasty** /'kɒlpəplæsti/ *noun* a surgical operation to repair a damaged vagina (NOTE: The plural is **colpoplasties**.)

**colporrhaphy** /kɒl'pɒrəfi/ *noun* a surgical operation to stitch a prolapsed vagina (NOTE: The plural is **colporrhaphies**.)

**colposcope** /'kɒlpəʊskəʊp/ *noun* a surgical instrument used to examine the inside of the vagina. Also called **vaginoscope**

**colposcopy** /kɒl'pɒskəpi/ *noun* an examination of the inside of the vagina (NOTE: The plural is **colposcopies**.)

**colposuspension** /,kɒlpəʊsə'spenʃən/ *noun* a surgical operation to strengthen the pelvic floor muscles to prevent incontinence

**colpotomy** /kɒl'pɒtəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to make a cut in the vagina (NOTE: The plural is **colpotomies**.)

**column** /'kɒləm/ *noun* ▶ **vertebral column**

**coma** /'kəʊmə/ *noun* a state of unconsciousness from which a person cannot be awakened by external stimuli

**comatose** /'kəʊmətəʊs/ *adjective* unconscious or in a coma

**combined therapy** /kəmˌbaɪnd 'θerəpi/ *noun* the use of two or more treatments at the same time

**comedo** /'kɒmɪdəʊ/ *noun* a small point of dark, hard matter in a sebaceous follicle, often found associated with acne on the skin of adolescents (NOTE: The plural is **comedones**.)

**comforter** /'kʌmfətə/ *noun* 1. someone who helps to make another person less anxious or unhappy 2. a baby's dummy

**commando operation** /kə'mɑ:ndəʊ ˌɒpəreɪʃ(ə)n/, **commando procedure** /kə'mɑ:ndəʊ prə'sɪ:dʒə/ *noun* a major operation to combat cancer of the face and neck. It involves the removal of facial features, which are later rebuilt.

**commensal** /kə'mensəl/ *noun* an animal or plant which lives on another animal or plant but does not harm it in any way. Both may benefit from the association. ○ *Candida* is a commensal in the mouths of 50% of healthy adults. (NOTE: If a commensal causes harm, it is a **parasite**.) ■ *adjective* living on another animal or plant

**comminuted** /'kɒmɪnju:tɪd/ *adjective* referring to a fracture where the bone is broken in several places

**comminuted fracture** /,kɒmɪnju:tɪd 'fræktʃə/ *noun* a fracture where the bone is broken in several places

**Commission for Health Improvement** /kə'mɪʃ(ə)n fə 'helθ ɪmˌpru:vmənt/ in the UK, the independent inspection body for the National Health Service, with the role of helping to raise standards of patient care. It aims to identify where improvement is required and share good practice. Abbreviation **CHI**

**commissure** /'kɒmɪsjə/ *noun* a structure which joins two similar tissues, e.g. a group of nerves which crosses from one part of the central

nervous system to another.  $\diamond$  **corpus callosum, grey commissure**

**Committee on Safety of Medicines** /kə ,mɪti ɒn ,seɪfti əv 'med(ə)sɪnz/ *noun* the official body which advises the British Government on the safety and quality of medicines

**commode** /kə'məʊd/ *noun* a special chair with a removable basin used as a toilet by people with limited mobility

**common bile duct** /,kɒmən 'baɪl dʌkt/ *noun* a duct leading to the duodenum, formed of the hepatic and cystic ducts

**common carotid artery** /,kɒmən kə'rɒtɪd ,ɑ:təri/ *noun* the main artery running up each side of the lower part of the neck. Also called **carotid**

**common cold** /,kɒmən 'kəʊld/ *noun* same as cold

**common hepatic duct** /,kɒmən hɪ'pætɪk dʌkt/ *noun* a duct from the liver formed when the right and left hepatic ducts join

**common iliac artery** /,kɒmən 'ɪliæk ,ɑ:təri/ *noun* one of two arteries which branch from the aorta in the abdomen and in turn divide into the internal iliac artery, leading to the pelvis, and the external iliac artery, leading to the leg

**communicable disease** /kə,mju:nɪkəb(ə)l dɪ'zɪz/ *noun* a disease which can be passed from one person to another or from an animal to a person.  $\diamond$  **contagious disease, infectious disease**

**communicating artery** /kə'mju:nɪkətɪŋ ,ɑ:təri/ *noun* one of the arteries which connect the blood supply from each side of the brain, forming part of the circle of Willis

**community** /kə'mju:nɪti/ *noun* a group of people who live and work in a district  $\circ$  *The health services serve the local community.*

**community care** /kə,mju:nɪti 'keə/ *noun* the providing of help to people such as those who are elderly or mentally ill in order to allow them to stay in their own homes, rather than requiring them to be cared for in hospitals or care homes

**community health** /kə,mju:nɪti 'helθ/ *noun* the health of a local community, or provision of services for a local community

**community health council** /kə,mju:nɪti 'helθ ,kaʊnsəl/ *noun* a statutory body of interested people from outside the medical professions charged with putting forward the patients' point of view on local health issues. Abbreviation **CHC**

**community hospital** /kə'mju:nɪti ,hɒspɪt(ə)l/ *noun* a hospital serving a local community

**community midwife** /kə,mju:nɪti 'mɪdwaɪf/ *noun* a midwife who works in a community as part of a primary health care team

**community nurse** /kə,mju:nɪti 'nɜ:s/ *noun* a nurse who treats people in a local community

**community paediatrician** /kə,mju:nɪti pi:diə'trɪf(ə)n/ *noun* a paediatrician serving a local community

**community pharmacist** /kə,mju:nɪti 'fɑ:məsɪst/, **retail pharmacist** /,rɪ:teɪl 'fɑ:məsɪst/ *noun* a person who makes medicines and sells them in a chemist's shop

**community psychiatric nurse** /kə,mju:nɪti ,saɪki'ætɪrɪk/ *noun*. Also called **community mental health nurse**. Abbreviation **CPN**

**community trust** /kə,mju:nɪti 'trʌst/ *noun* an independent non-profit-making body set up to represent an area of public concern

**compact bone** /,kɒmpækt 'bɒn/ *noun* a type of bone tissue which forms the hard outer layer of a bone. See illustration at **BONE STRUCTURE** in Supplement

**compartment** /kəm'pɑ:tmənt/ *noun* one of the areas into which an enclosed space is divided

**compatibility** /kəm,pætrɪ'bɪlɪti/ *noun* the ability of two drugs not to interfere with each other when administered together

**compatible** /kəm'pætɪb(ə)l/ *adjective* able to function together without being rejected  $\circ$  *The surgeons are trying to find a compatible donor or a donor with a compatible blood group.*

**compensate** /'kɒmpənsɪt/ *verb* 1. to give someone an amount of money or something else to pay for loss or damage 2. (of an organ) to make good the failure of an organ by making another organ, or the undamaged parts of the same organ, function at a higher level  $\circ$  *The heart has to beat more strongly to compensate for the narrowing of the arteries.* 3. to emphasise a particular ability or personality characteristic in order to make the lack of another one seem less bad

**compensation** /,kɒmpən'seɪf(ə)n/ *noun* 1. something which makes something else seem less bad or less serious 2. an amount of money or something else given to pay for loss or damage  $\circ$  *The drugs caused him to develop breathing problems, so he thinks he's entitled to medical compensation.* 3. the act of giving money to pay for loss or damage  $\circ$  *compensation for loss of a limb* 4. a situation where the body helps to correct a problem in a particular organ by making another organ, or the undamaged parts of the same organ, function at a higher level 5. behaviour that emphasises a particular ability or personality characteristic in order to make the lack of another one seem less bad

**competence** /'kɒmpɪt(ə)ns/ *noun* the ability to do something well, measured against a standard, especially ability which you get through experience or training  $\circ$  *encouraging the development of professional competence in the delivery of care to patients*

**competency** /'kɒmpɪt(ə)nsi/ *noun* a guideline, usually one of several, for the medical treat-



ment that is to be given in particular circumstances

**complaint** /kəm'pleɪnt/ *noun* **1.** an expression of dissatisfaction about something or someone ○ *The hospital administrator wouldn't listen to the complaints of the consultants.* **2.** an illness ○ *a chest complaint* ○ *a nervous complaint*

**complement** *noun* /'kɒmplɪmənt/ a substance which forms part of blood plasma and is essential to the work of antibodies and antigens ■ **verb** /'kɒmplɪment/ to complete something by providing useful or pleasing qualities which it does not itself have

**complementary** /,kɒmplɪ'ment(ə)ri/ *adjective* **1.** combining with or adding to something else ○ *Ultrasound and CT provide complementary information.* **2.** used in or using complementary medicine ○ *complementary therapies* **3.** referring to genes which are necessary to each other and produce their effect only when they are present together

**complementary medicine** /,kɒmplɪment(ə)ri'med(ə)si:n/ *noun* the forms of alternative medicine which are now accepted by practitioners of conventional Western medicine, e.g. acupuncture and osteopathy

**complete abortion** /kəm'pli:t ə'bo:ʃ(ə)n/ *noun* an abortion where the whole contents of the uterus are expelled

**complete blood count** /kəm'pli:t 'blʌd kaʊnt/ *noun* a test to find the exact numbers of each type of blood cell in a sample of blood. Abbreviation **CBC**

**complicated fracture** /,kɒmplɪkətɪd 'fræktʃə/ *noun* a fracture with an associated injury of tissue, as when a bone has punctured an artery

**complication** /,kɒmplɪ'keɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* **1.** a condition in which two or more conditions exist in someone, whether or not they are connected ○ *He was admitted to hospital suffering from pneumonia with complications.* **2.** a situation in which someone develops a second condition which changes the course of treatment for the first ○ *She appeared to be improving, but complications set in and she died in a few hours.*

**compos mentis** /,kɒmpɒs 'mentɪs/ *adjective* not affected by a mental disorder (NOTE: The phrase is from Latin and means 'of sound mind'.)

**compound fracture** /,kɒmpaʊnd 'fræktʃə/ *noun* a fracture where the skin surface is damaged or where the broken bone penetrates the surface of the skin. Also called **open fracture**

**compress** *noun* /'kɒmpres/ a wad of cloth soaked in hot or cold liquid and applied to the skin to relieve pain or swelling, or to force pus out of an infected wound ■ **verb** /kəm'pres/ to squeeze or press something

**compressed air sickness** /kəm'prest 'eə ,sɪknəs/ *noun* same as **caisson disease**

**compression** /kəm'preʃ(ə)n/ *noun* **1.** the act of squeezing or pressing ○ *The first-aidier applied compression to the chest of the casualty.* **2.** a serious condition in which the brain is compressed by blood or cerebrospinal fluid accumulating in it or by a fractured skull

**compression stocking** /kəm'preʃ(ə)n 'stɒkɪŋ/ *noun* a strong elastic stocking worn to support a weak joint in the knee or to hold varicose veins tightly

**compulsion** /kəm'pʌlʃ(ə)n/ *noun* **1.** an act of forcing someone to do something, or the fact of being forced to do something ○ *You are under no compulsion to treat a violent patient.* **2.** a strong psychological force which makes someone do something, often unwillingly ○ *She felt a sudden compulsion to wash her hands again.*

**compulsive** /kəm'pʌlsɪv/ *adjective* referring to a feeling which cannot be stopped ○ *She has a compulsive desire to steal.*

**compulsive-obsessive disorder** /kəm ,pʌlsɪv əb'sesɪv dɪs,ɔ:də/ *noun* same as **obsessive-compulsive disorder**

**compulsory admission** /kəm,pʌlsəri əd 'mɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the process of admitting someone who is mentally ill to hospital for treatment whether or not they consent

**computed tomography** /kəm'pjʊ:tɪd tə 'mɒgrəfi/ *noun* same as **computerised axial tomography**. Abbreviation **CT**

**computerised axial tomography** /kəm ,pjʊ:təraɪzd ,æksɪəl tə'mɒgrəfi/ *noun* a system of examining the body in which a narrow X-ray beam, guided by a computer, photographs a thin section of the body or of an organ from several angles, using the computer to build up an image of the section. Abbreviation **CAT**. Also called **computed tomography**

**-conazole** /kɒnəzəʊl/ *suffix* used in the names of antifungal drugs ○ *fluconazole*

**concave** /'kɒnkeɪv/ *adjective* curving towards the inside ○ *a concave lens*

**concept** /'kɒnsept/ *noun* a thought or idea, or something which someone might be able to imagine

**conception** /kən'sepʃən/ *noun* the point at which a woman becomes pregnant and the development of a baby starts

**conceptual framework** /kən'septʃʊəl 'freɪmwɜ:k/ *noun* the theoretical basis on which something is formed

**conceptus** /kən'septəs/ *noun* an embryo or fetus together with all the tissues that surround it during pregnancy (NOTE: The plural is **conceptuses**.)

**concha** /'kɒŋkə/ *noun* a part of the body shaped like a shell (NOTE: The plural is **conchae**.)

**concordance** /kən'kɔ:d(ə)nɪs/ *noun* **1.** a state in which two or more things are in the correct or

expected relationship to each other. For example, the atrioventricular concordance is the relationship between the atria and the ventricles in the heart. **2.** the fact of two related people sharing the same genetic characteristic ○ *the concordance of schizophrenia in identical twins* **3.** an agreement between a professional and a patient on a course of treatment, especially related to use of medicines

**concretion** /kən'kri:f(ə)n/ *noun* a mass of hard material which forms in the body, e.g. a gallstone or deposits on bone in arthritis

**concussion** /kən'kʌf(ə)n/ *noun* **1.** the act of applying force to any part of the body **2.** loss of consciousness for a short period, caused by a blow to the head

**condition** /kən'dɪf(ə)n/ *noun* **1.** the particular state of someone or something ○ *in poor condition* ○ *Her condition is getting worse.* ○ *The conditions in the hospital are very good.* **2.** a particular illness, injury or disorder ○ *He is being treated for a heart condition.*

**conditioned reflex** /kən,dɪf(ə)nd 'ri:fleks/ *noun* an automatic reaction by a person to a stimulus, or an expected reaction to a stimulus which comes from past experience

**conditioned response** /kən,dɪf(ə)nd rɪ'spɒns/ *noun* a response to a stimulus as a result of associating it with an earlier stimulus

COMMENT: The classic example of a conditioned response is Pavlov's experiment with dogs in which they produced saliva, ready to eat their food, when a bell rang, because on previous occasions they had been fed when the bell was rung.

**condom** /'kɒndəm/ *noun* a rubber sheath worn on the penis during intercourse as a contraceptive and also as a protection against sexually transmitted disease

**conducting system** /kən'dʌktɪŋ ,sɪstəm/ *noun* the nerve system in the heart which links an atrium to a ventricle, so that the two beat at the same rate

**conduction** /kən'dʌkʃən/ *noun* the process of passing heat, sound or nervous impulses from one part of the body to another

**conductive deafness** /kən,dʌktɪv 'defnəs/, **conductive hearing loss** /kən,dʌktɪv 'hɪərɪŋ ,lɒs/ *noun* deafness caused by inadequate conduction of sound into the inner ear

**conductor** /kən'dʌktə/ *noun* **1.** a substance or object which allows heat, electricity, light or sound to pass along it or through it **2.** a tube with a groove in it along which a knife is slid to cut open a sinus

**condyle** /'kɒndaɪl/ *noun* a rounded end of a bone which articulates with another

**condyloid process** /'kɒndɪləɪd ,prəʊses/ *noun* a projecting part at each end of the lower

jaw which forms the head of the jaw, joining the jaw to the skull

**condyloma** /,kɒndɪ'ləʊmə/ *noun* a growth usually found on the vulva (NOTE: The plural is **condylomas** or **condylomata**.)

**cone** /kəʊn/ *noun* **1.** a shape with a circular base or top and a part that tapers to a point, or an object with this shape **2.** one of two types of cell in the retina of the eye which is sensitive to light, used especially in the perception of bright light and colour. ♀ **rod** ■ *verb* to show a rapid change for the worse in neurological condition due to herniation of the midbrain through the foramen magnum in the skull, caused by raised pressure inside the brain (NOTE: **cones** – **coning** – **coned**)

**cone biopsy** /'kəʊn baɪ,ɒpsɪ/ *noun* the removing of a cone of tissue from the cervix for examination

**confabulation** /kən,fæjʊ'leɪf(ə)n/ *noun* the act of making up plausible stories to cover up loss of memory

**confidentiality** /,kɒnfɪdəntʃɪ'æltɪti/ *noun* an obligation not to reveal professional information about a person or organisation

**confounding factor** /kən'faʊndɪŋ ,fæktə/ *noun* a factor which has an association with both a disease and a risk factor and thus complicates the nature of the relationship between them

**confused** /kən'fju:zd/ *adjective* unable to think clearly or act rationally ○ *Many severely confused patients do not respond to spoken communication.*

**confusion** /kən'fju:z(ə)n/ *noun* the state of being confused

**congenital** /kən'dʒɛnɪt(ə)l/ *adjective* existing at or before birth

**congenital aneurysm** /kən,dʒɛnɪt(ə)l 'ænjəɪz(ə)m/ *noun* a weakening of the arteries at the base of the brain, present at birth

**congenital cataract** /kən,dʒɛnɪt(ə)l 'kætəɹækt/ *noun* a cataract which is present at birth

**congenital dislocation of the hip** /kən ,dʒɛnɪt(ə)l dɪslə,keɪf(ə)n əv ðə 'hɪp/ *noun* a condition in which a person is born with weak ligaments in the hip, so that the femur does not stay in position in the pelvis

**congenital heart disease** /kən,dʒɛnɪt(ə)l 'hɑ:t dɪ,zɪ:z/, **congenital heart defect** /kən ,dʒɛnɪt(ə)l 'hɑ:t ,dɪ:fekt/ *noun* a heart condition existing at birth

**congenital hyperthyroidism** /kən ,dʒɛnɪt(ə)l ,haɪpə'θaɪrɔɪdɪz(ə)m/ *noun* a disease caused by a malfunction of the thyroid before birth or in early life

**congenital malformation** /kən,dʒɛnɪt(ə)l ,mælfɔ:'meɪf(ə)n/ *noun* a malformation which is present at birth, e.g. a cleft palate

**congenital syphilis** /kən,dʒeɪnt(ə)l 'sɪfɪlɪs/ *noun* syphilis which is passed on from a mother to her unborn child

**congenital toxoplasmosis** /kən,dʒeɪnt(ə)l ˌtɒksəʊplæz'məʊsɪs/ *noun* a condition in which a baby has been infected with toxoplasmosis by its mother while still in the uterus

**congestion** /kən'dʒestʃən/ *noun* an accumulation of blood in an organ. † **nasal congestion**

**congestive** /kən'dʒestɪv/ *adjective* referring to congestion

**conisation** /kɒnər'zeɪʃ(ə)n/, **conization** *noun* the surgical removal of a cone-shaped piece of tissue

**conjoined twins** /kən,dʒɔɪnd 'tɪwɪnz/ *plural noun* twins who are joined together at birth. Also called **Siamese twins**

COMMENT: Conjoined twins are always identical and can be joined at the head, chest or hip. In some cases they can be separated by surgery, but this is not possible if they share a single important organ such as the heart.

**conjugate** /'kɒndʒuɡeɪt/, **conjugate diameter** /'kɒndʒuɡət daɪ'æmɪtə/ *noun* a measurement of space in a woman's pelvis, used to calculate if it is large enough for a child to be delivered

**conjunctiva** /,kɒndʒʌŋk'taɪvə/ *noun* a membrane which covers the front of the eyeball and the inside of the eyelids. See illustration at **EYE** in Supplement (NOTE: The plural is **conjunctivas** or **conjunctivae**.)

**conjunctival** /,kɒndʒʌŋk'taɪv(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to the conjunctiva

**conjunctivitis** /kɒn,dʒʌŋktɪ'vaɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the conjunctiva from a range of causes

**connective tissue** /kə'nektɪv 'tɪʃuː/ *noun* tissue which forms the main part of bones and cartilage, ligaments and tendons, in which a large proportion of fibrous material surrounds the tissue cells

**Conn's syndrome** /'kɒnz ,sɪndrəʊm/ *noun* a condition in which excessive production of the hormone aldosterone causes fluid retention and high blood pressure

**consanguinity** /,kɒnsæŋ'gwɪnɪti/ *noun* a blood relationship between people

**conscious** /'kɒnʃəs/ *adjective* **1.** awake and aware of what is happening ○ *He became conscious in the recovery room two hours after the operation.* **2.** deliberate and intended ○ *a conscious choice*

**-conscious** /kɒnʃəs/ *suffix* giving importance to ○ *health-conscious* ○ *safety-conscious*

**consciousness** /'kɒnʃənsəs/ *noun* the state of being mentally alert and knowing what is happening

**consensus management** /kən'sensəs ,mæɪnɪdʒmənt/ *noun* a form of management

which aims to get everyone to agree on what actions should be taken

**consent** /kən'sent/ *noun* agreement to allow someone to do something ○ *The parents gave their consent for their son's heart to be used in the transplant operation.*

**consent form** /kən'sent fɔ:m/ *noun* a form which a patient signs to show that he or she agrees to have a particular operation

**conservative treatment** /kən,sɜ:vətɪv 'tri:tmənt/ *noun* medical or surgical treatment which is limited to conventional measures rather than more extreme or risky procedures ○ *Symptoms usually resolve with conservative treatment.*

**consolidation** /kən,sɒlɪ'deɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a stage in mending a broken bone in which the callus formed at the break changes into bone

**constipation** /,kɒnstɪ'peɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* difficulty in passing faeces

**constrictive pericarditis** /kən'strɪktɪv ,perɪkə:'daɪtɪs/ *noun* same as **chronic pericarditis**

**constrictor** /kən'strɪktə/ *noun* a muscle which squeezes an organ or which makes an organ contract

**consultant** /kən'sʌltənt/ *noun* **1.** a doctor who is a senior specialist in a particular branch of medicine and who is consulted by GPs ○ *She was referred to a consultant at the orthopaedic hospital.* **2.** a senior specialised doctor in a hospital

**consumption** /kən'sʌmpʃ(ə)n/ *noun* **1.** the act of taking food or liquid into the body ○ *the patient's increased consumption of alcohol* **2.** a former name for pulmonary tuberculosis

**contact dermatitis** /,kɒntækt ,dɜ:mə'taɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the skin caused by touch, e.g. by touching some types of plant, soap or chemical. Also called **irritant dermatitis**

**contact lens** /'kɒntækt lenz/ *noun* a tiny plastic lens which fits over the eyeball and is worn instead of spectacles to improve eyesight

**contact tracing** /'kɒntækt ,treɪsɪŋ/ *noun* the process of tracing people with whom someone with an infectious disease has been in contact

**contagious** /kən'teɪdʒəs/ *adjective* able to be transmitted by touching an infected person or objects which an infected person has touched

**contagious disease** /kən'teɪdʒəs dɪ'zi:z/ *noun* a disease which can be transmitted by touching an infected person or objects which an infected person has touched. † **communicable disease, infectious disease**

**containment** /kən'teɪnmənt/ *noun* **1.** action taken to restrict the spread of something undesirable or dangerous such as a disease ○ *government policy of containment of the SARS virus* **2.** the eradication of a global disease such as smallpox by removing it region by region

**contaminate** /kən'tæmɪneɪt/ *verb* **1.** to make something impure by touching it or by adding something to it ○ *Supplies of drinking water were contaminated by refuse from the factories.* ○ *The whole group of tourists fell ill after eating contaminated food.* **2.** to spread infection to someone or something

**continence** /'kɒntɪnəns/ *noun* **1.** the ability to control the discharge of urine and faeces **2.** self-restraint

**continent** /'kɒntɪnənt/ *adjective* able to exercise control over the discharge of urine and faeces

**continuing education** /kən,tɪnjuɪŋ ,edʒu 'keɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* regular courses or training designed to bring professional people up to date with the latest developments in their particular field

**continuous ambulatory peritoneal dialysis** /kən,tɪnjuəs ,æmbjʊlət(ə)rɪ pərɪtə,nɪ:əl daɪ'æləsɪs/ *noun* a method of dialysis of people while they are walking about. Abbreviation **CAPD**

**continuous positive airways pressure** /kən,tɪnjuəs ,pɒzɪtɪv 'eəweɪz ,prɛʃəl *noun* a method used in intensive care which forces air into the lungs of someone with lung collapse. Abbreviation **CPAP**

**contra-** /kɒntrə/ *prefix* against, opposite, contrasting

**contraception** /,kɒntrə'sepʃən/ *noun* the prevention of pregnancy, e.g. by using devices such as a condom or an IUD, or drugs in the form of contraceptive pills or injections at regular intervals. Also called **birth control**

**contraceptive** /,kɒntrə'septɪv/ *adjective* preventing conception ○ *a contraceptive device* or *drug* ■ *noun* a drug or device which prevents pregnancy

**contraceptive sheath** /,kɒntrə'septɪv ʃi:θ/ *noun* same as **condom**

**contraceptive sponge** /,kɒntrə'septɪv spʌndʒ/ *noun* a piece of synthetic sponge impregnated with spermicide, which is inserted into the vagina before intercourse

**contractibility** /'kɒntræktɪbɪlɪti/ *noun* the capacity to contract

**contraction** /kən'træktʃən/ *noun* **1.** the act of making something smaller or of becoming smaller ○ *the contraction of dental services* **2.** a tightening movement which makes a muscle shorter, which makes the pupil of the eye smaller or which makes the skin wrinkle

**contracture** /kən'træktʃəl/ *noun* a permanent tightening of a muscle caused by fibrosis

**contraindication** /,kɒntrə'ɪndɪ'keɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* something which suggests that someone should not be treated with a specific drug or not continue with a specific treatment because circumstances make that treatment unsuitable

**contralateral** /,kɒntrə'lætərəl/ *adjective* located on or affecting the opposite side of the body. Opposite **ipsilateral**

**contrast medium** /'kɒntrɑ:st ,mɪ:diəm/ *noun* a radio-opaque dye, or sometimes gas, put into an organ or part of the body so that it will show clearly in an X-ray photograph ○ *In an MRI scan no contrast medium is required; in a CAT scan iodine-based contrast media are often required.*

**contrecoup** /'kɒntrəku:/ *noun* an injury to one point of an organ such as the brain, caused by a blow received on an opposite point of the organ

**control** /kən'trəʊl/ *verb* **1.** to have the ability or authority to direct someone or something ○ *Sometimes we need help to control people who think they have waited too long.* **2.** to limit or restrain something ○ *administered drugs to control the pain* ■ *noun* **1.** the ability or authority to control something ○ *After her stroke she had no control over her left arm.* ○ *The administrators are in control of the admissions policy.* **2.** a person or group whose test data are used as a comparison in a study **3.** a comparison in a study

**controlled drug** /kən'trəʊld 'drʌg/ *noun* a drug which is not freely available, which is restricted by law and classified as A, B, or C and of which possession may be an offence. Also called **controlled substance**

**controlled substance** /kən'trəʊld 'sʌbstəns/ *noun* same as **controlled drug**

**controlled trial** /kən'trəʊld 'traɪəl/ *noun* a trial in which members of one group are treated with a test substance and those of another group are treated with a placebo as a control

**controls assurance** /kən'trəʊlz ə,'ʃʊərəns/ *noun* a process designed to provide evidence that NHS organisations are doing their best to manage themselves both in order to meet their objectives and to protect patients, staff and the public against risks of all kinds

**contused wound** /kən,tju:zd 'wu:nd/ *noun* a wound caused by a blow where the skin is bruised as well as torn and bleeding

**contusion** /kən'tju:z(ə)n/ *noun* same as **bruise**

**convalescence** /,kɒnvə'sles(ə)ns/ *noun* a period of time when someone is convalescing

**convergent strabismus** /kən,vɜ:dʒənt strə 'bɪzməs/, **convergent squint** /kən,vɜ:dʒənt 'skwɪnt/ *noun* a condition in which one or both of a person's eyes look towards the nose. Also called **cross eye**

**conversion** /kən'vɜ:ʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the process of changing one thing into another ○ *the conversion of nutrients into tissue*

**convex** /'kɒnveks/ *adjective* curving towards the outside ○ *a convex lens*

**convoluted** /'kɒnvələ:tɪd/ *adjective* folded and twisted

**convolution** /,kɒnvəl'u:ʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a twisted shape ○ *the convolutions of the surface of the cerebrum*

**convulsion** /kən'vʌlʃən/ *noun* the rapid involuntary contracting and relaxing of the muscles in several parts of the body ○ *The child had convulsions.* ◊ **fit** (NOTE: Often used in the plural.)

**Cooley's anaemia** /'ku:lɪz ə,nɪ:mɪə/ *noun* same as **thalassaemia** [Described 1927. After Thomas Benton Cooley (1871–1945), Professor of Paediatrics at Wayne College of Medicine, Detroit, USA.]

**Coombs' test** /'ku:mz test/ *noun* a test for antibodies in red blood cells, used as a test for erythroblastosis fetalis and other haemolytic syndromes [Described 1945. After Robin Royston Amos Coombs (1921–2006), Quick Professor of Biology, and Fellow of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, UK]

**coordination** /kəʊ,ɔ:dɪ'neɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* **1.** the combining of two or more things as an effective unit, or the way things combine effectively ○ *requires coordination between nursing staff and doctors* **2.** the ability to use two or more parts of the body at the same time to carry out a movement or task ○ *The patient showed lack of coordination between eyes and hands.*

**COPD** *abbreviation* chronic obstructive pulmonary disease

**coping mechanism** /'kəʊpɪŋ ,mekənɪz(ə)m/ *noun* a method of dealing with situations which cause psychological stress

**copper** /'kɒpə/ *noun* a metallic trace element (NOTE: The chemical symbol is **Cu.**)

**copr-** /kɒpɪ/ *prefix* faeces

**coprolith** /'kɒprəlɪθ/ *noun* a lump of hard faeces in the bowel

**cor** /kɔ:/ *noun* the heart

**coraco-acromial** /,kɒrəkəʊ ə'krəʊmɪəl/ *adjective* referring to the coracoid process and the acromion

**coracoid process** /'kɒrəkɔɪd ,prəʊsɪz/ *noun* a projecting part on the shoulder blade

**cord** /kɔ:d/ *noun* a long flexible structure in the body like a thread

**cordectomy** /kɔ:'dektəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to remove a vocal cord (NOTE: The plural is **cordectomies.**)

**cordotomy** /kɔ:'dɒtəmi/ *noun* another spelling of **chordotomy**

**corium** /'kɔ:riəm/ *noun* same as **dermis**

**corn** /kɔ:n/ *noun* a hard painful lump of skin usually on a foot, where something such as a tight shoe has rubbed or pressed on the skin. Also called **heloma**

**cornea** /'kɔ:niə/ *noun* a transparent part of the front of the eyeball. See illustration at **EYE** in Supplement (NOTE: The plural is **corneae.** For other terms referring to the cornea, see words beginning with **kerat-**, **kerato-**)

**corneal** /'kɔ:niəl/ *adjective* relating to a cornea

**corneal graft** /,kɔ:niəl 'grɑ:ft/ *noun* **1.** a surgical operation to graft corneal tissue from a donor or from a dead person to replace diseased tissue. Also called **corneal transplant**, **keratoplasty** **2.** a piece of corneal tissue used in a graft

**corneal reflex** /,kɔ:niəl 'rɪ:fleks/ *noun* a reflex from touching or hitting the cornea which makes the eyelid close

**corneal transplant** /'kɔ:niəl ,trænsplɑ:nt/ *noun* same as **corneal graft**

**cornification** /,kɔ:ni'fɪ'keɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* same as **keratinisation**

**cornu** /'kɔ:nju:/ *noun* a structure in the body which is shaped like a horn

**corona** /kə'rəʊnə/ *noun* a structure in the body which is shaped like a crown

**coronal** /'kɒrən(ə)l, kə'rəʊn(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to a corona

**coronal plane** /,kɒrən(ə)l 'pleɪn/ *noun* a plane at right angles to the median plane, dividing the body into dorsal and ventral halves. See illustration at **ANATOMICAL TERMS** in Supplement

**coronal suture** /,kɒrən(ə)l 'su:tʃə/ *noun* a horizontal joint across the top of the skull between the parietal and frontal bones

**coronary** /'kɒrən(ə)ri/ *noun* same as **coronary thrombosis** (*informal*) ■ *adjective* referring to any structure shaped like a crown, but especially to the arteries which supply blood to the heart muscles

**coronary artery** /'kɒrən(ə)ri ,ɑ:təri/ *noun* one of the two arteries which supply blood to the heart muscles

**coronary artery bypass graft** /,kɒrən(ə)ri ,ɑ:təri 'baɪpɑ:s grɑ:ft/, **coronary artery bypass** /,kɒrən(ə)ri ,ɑ:təri 'baɪpɑ:s/ *noun* a surgical operation to treat angina by grafting pieces of vein around the diseased part of a coronary artery

**coronary care unit** /,kɒrən(ə)ri 'keə ,ju:nɪt/ *noun* the section of a hospital caring for people who have heart disorders or who have had heart surgery. Abbreviation **CCU**

**coronary heart disease** /,kɒrən(ə)ri 'hɑ:t dɪ:zi:z/ *noun* any disease affecting the coronary arteries, which can lead to strain on the heart or a heart attack. Abbreviation **CHD**

**coronary sinus** /,kɒrən(ə)ri 'saɪnəs/ *noun* a vein which takes most of the venous blood from the heart muscles to the right atrium

**coronary thrombosis** /,kɒrən(ə)ri θrɒm 'bəʊsɪz/ *noun* a blood clot which blocks the cor-

onary arteries, leading to a heart attack. Also called **coronary**

**coronavirus** /kə'reɪnəvə'raɪəs/ *noun* a type of virus which has been identified in people who have the common cold

**coroner** /'kɒrənə/ *noun* a public official, either a doctor or a lawyer, who investigates sudden or violent deaths

**coronoid process** /'kɒrənɔɪd ,prəʊses/ *noun* a projecting piece of bone on the ulna

**corpora** plural of **corpus**

**corpse** /kɔ:ps/ *noun* the body of a dead person

**corpus** /'kɔ:pəs/ *noun* any mass of tissue (NOTE: The plural is **corpora**.)

**corpus callosum** /,kɔ:pəs kə'ləʊsəm/ *noun* the thick band of nerve fibres that connects the two hemispheres of the brain and allows them to communicate. See illustration at **BRAIN** in Supplement (NOTE: The plural is **corpora callosa**.)

**corpus cavernosum** /,kɔ:pəs ,kævə'nəʊsəm/ *noun* a part of the erectile tissue in the penis and clitoris. See illustration at **UROGENITAL SYSTEM (MALE)** in Supplement (NOTE: The plural is **corpora cavernosa**.)

**corpuscle** /'kɔ:pəs(ə)/ *noun* 1. a small round mass 2. a cell in blood or lymph

**corpus luteum** /,kɔ:pəs 'lu:tɪəm/ *noun* a body which forms in each ovary after a Graafian follicle has ruptured. The corpus luteum secretes the hormone progesterone to prepare the uterus for implantation of the fertilised ovum. (NOTE: The plural is **corpora lutea**.)

**corpus spongiosum** /,kɔ:pəs ,sprɒŋʒɪ'əʊsəm/ *noun* the part of the penis round the urethra, forming the glans. See illustration at **UROGENITAL SYSTEM (MALE)** in Supplement (NOTE: The plural is **corpora spongiosa**.)

**corrective** /kə'rektɪv/ *adjective* intended to correct an irregularity or problem ○ *corrective lenses* ■ *noun* a drug which changes the harmful effect of another drug

**Corrigan's pulse** /,kɒrɪgənɪz 'pʌls/ *noun* a condition occurring in the arterial pulse in the neck in which there is a visible rise in pressure followed by a sudden collapse, caused by aortic regurgitation. Also called **water-hammer pulse**

**corrugator muscle** /'kɒrəreɪtə ,mas(ə)/ *noun* one of the muscles which produce vertical wrinkles on the forehead when someone frowns

**cortex** /'kɔ:teks/ *noun* the outer layer of an organ, as opposed to the soft inner medulla (NOTE: The plural is **cortices** or **cortexes**.)

**Corti** /'kɔ:ti/ ♦ **organ of Corti**

**cranial mastoidectomy** /,kɔ:trɪk(ə)l ,kræɪn'leɪdktəmi/ *noun* same as **atticotomy**

**cortices** plural of **cortex**

**corticospinal** /,kɔ:trɪkəʊ'spaɪn(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to both the cerebral cortex and the spinal cord

**corticosteroid** /,kɔ:trɪkəʊ'stɪrɔɪd/ *noun* 1. any steroid hormone produced by the cortex of the adrenal glands 2. a drug which reduces inflammation, used in asthma, gastro-intestinal disease and in adrenocortical insufficiency

**corticotrophin** /,kɔ:trɪkəʊ'trəʊfɪn/ *noun* same as **adrenocorticotrophic hormone**

**cortisol** /'kɔ:trɪsɒl/ *noun* same as **hydrocortisone**

**cortisone** /'kɔ:trɪzəʊn/ *noun* a hormone secreted in small quantities by the adrenal cortex ○ *The doctor gave her a cortisone injection in the ankle.*

**Corynebacterium** /kəʊ,rɪnɪbæk'tɪrɪəm/ *noun* a genus of bacteria which includes the bacterium which causes diphtheria

**coryza** /kə'reɪzə/ *noun* an illness, with inflammation of the nasal passages, in which someone sneezes and coughs and has a blocked and running nose (*technical*) Also called **cold**, **common cold**

**cosmetic surgery** /kɔz,metɪk 'sɜ:dʒəri/ *noun* a surgical operation to improve a person's appearance

**cost-** /kɒst/ *prefix* same as **costo-** (*used before vowels*)

**costal** /'kɒst(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to the ribs

**costive** /'kɒstɪv/ *noun* a drug which causes constipation

**costo-** /kɒstəʊ/ *prefix* referring to the ribs

**cot death** /'kɒt deθ/ *noun* ♦ **sudden infant death syndrome**

**co-trimoxazole** /,kəʊ traɪ'mɒksəzəʊl/ *noun* a drug used to combat bacteria in the urinary tract

**cotyledon** /,kɒtɪ'li:d(ə)n/ *noun* one of the divisions of a placenta

**cotyloid cavity** /'kɒtɪlɔɪd ,kævɪti/ *noun* same as **acetabulum**

**couching** /'kəʊtʃɪŋ/ *noun* a surgical operation to displace the opaque lens of an eye as a treatment for cataracts

**cough** /kɒf/ *noun* a reflex action, caused by irritation in the throat, when the glottis is opened and air is sent out of the lungs suddenly ■ an infection that causes coughing ○ *She has a bad cough and cannot make the speech.* ■ *verb* to send air out of the lungs suddenly because the throat is irritated ○ *The smoke made him cough.* ○ *She has a cold and keeps on coughing and sneezing.*

**cough medicine** /'kɒf ,med(ə)sn̩/, **cough linctus** /'kɒf ,lɪŋktəs/, **cough mixture** /'kɒf ,mɪkstʃə/ *noun* a liquid taken to soothe the irritation which causes a cough

**counselling** /'kaʊnsəlɪŋ/ *noun* a method of treating especially psychiatric disorders in which

a specialist talks with a person about his or her condition and how to deal with it

**counterextension** /,kaʊntərɪk'stɛnʃən/ *noun* an orthopaedic treatment in which the upper part of a limb is kept fixed and traction is applied to the lower part of it

**counterirritant** /,kaʊntər'ɪrɪt(ə)nt/ *noun* a substance which alleviates the pain in an internal organ by irritating an area of skin whose sensory nerves are close to those of the organ in the spinal cord

**coupling** /'kʌplɪŋ/ *noun* **1.** an act of joining together or linking two people, things or processes **2.** something which joins two things, especially a device for connecting two pieces of pipe, hose or tube

**covade** /ku:'vɑ:d/ *noun* an act of copying the actions of having a baby while a woman is actually giving birth, done by the father in some Native South American societies

**Cowper's glands** /'ku:pəz glændz/ *plural noun* two glands at the base of the penis which secrete into the urethra. Also called **bulbourethral glands** [Described 1700. After William Cowper (1666–1709), English surgeon.]

**cowpox** /'kaʊpɒks/ *noun* an infectious viral disease of cattle which can be transmitted to humans. It was used as a constituent of the first vaccines for smallpox.

**cox-** /kɒks/ *prefix* the hip joint

**coxa** /'kɒksə/ *noun* the hip joint (NOTE: The plural is **coxae**.)

**coxalgia** /kɒk'sældʒə/ *noun* pain in the hip joint

**coxa vara** /,kɒksə 'vɛərə/ *noun* an unusual development of the hip bone, making the legs bow

**Coxsackie virus** /kɒk'sæki ,vaɪrəs/ *noun* one of a group of enteroviruses which enter the cells of the intestines and can cause diseases such as aseptic meningitis and Bornholm disease [After Coxsackie, New York, where the virus was first identified.]

**CPAP** *abbreviation* continuous positive airways pressure

**CPN** *abbreviation* community psychiatric nurse

**CPR** *abbreviation* cardiopulmonary resuscitation

**crab** /kræb/, **crab louse** /'kræb laʊs/ *noun* a louse, *Phthirus pubis*, which infests the pubic region and other parts of the body with coarse hair. Also called **pubic louse**

**crack** /kræk/ *noun* a thin break ○ *There's a crack in one of the bones in the skull.* ■ *verb* to make a thin break in something, or become split ○ *She cracked a bone in her leg.*

**cradle** /'kreɪd(ə)/ *noun* a metal frame put over a person in bed to keep the weight of the bedclothes off the body ■ *verb* to carry a child with

one arm under the thigh and the other under the upper back

**cradle cap** /'kreɪd(ə)l kæp/ *noun* a yellow deposit on the scalp of babies, caused by seborrhoea

**cramp** /kræmp/ *noun* a painful involuntary spasm in the muscles, in which the muscle may stay contracted for some time

**crani-** /kreɪni/ *prefix* same as **cranio-** (used before vowels)

**crania** plural of **cranium**

**cranial** /'kreɪniəl/ *adjective* referring to the skull

**cranio-** /kreɪniəʊ/ *prefix* the skull

**craniometry** /,kreɪni'ɒmɪtri/ *noun* the process of measuring skulls to find differences in size and shape

**craniopharyngioma** /,kreɪniəʊfə,rɪndʒi 'əʊmə/ *noun* a tumour in the brain originating in the hypophyseal duct (NOTE: The plural is **craniopharyngiomas** or **craniopharyngiomata**.)

**craniostenosis** /,kreɪniəʊste'nəʊsɪs/, **crani-osynostosis** /,kreɪniəʊ,sɪnəʊ'stəʊsɪs/ *noun* the early closing of the bones in a baby's skull, so making the skull contract

**craniotabes** /,kreɪniəʊ'teɪbɪz/ *noun* thinness of the bones in the occipital region of a child's skull, caused by rickets, marasmus or syphilis

**craniotomy** /,kreɪni'ɒtəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation on the skull, especially one cutting away part of the skull (NOTE: The plural is **craniotomies**.)

**cranium** /'kreɪniəm/ *noun* same as **skull** (NOTE: The plural is **craniums** or **crania**.)

**CRB check** /,si: ɑ: 'bi: tʃek/ *noun* a check with the Criminal Records Bureau to establish whether a candidate has any convictions that disallow him or her from working with children or other vulnerable members of society. Also called **disclosure check**

**creatine** /'kri:ti:n/ *noun* a compound of nitrogen found in the muscles, produced by protein metabolism and excreted as creatinine

**creatinine** /kri'ætəni:n/ *noun* a substance which is the form in which creatine is excreted

**creatinuria** /kri,ætɪ'njʊəriə/ *noun* excess creatine in the urine

**creatorrhoea** /,kri:ətə'ri:ə/ *noun* the presence of undigested muscle fibre in the faeces, occurring in some pancreatic diseases

**Credé's method** /kre'deɪz ,meθəd/ *noun* **1.** a method of extracting a placenta by massaging the uterus through the abdomen **2.** the putting of silver nitrate solution into the eyes of a baby born to a mother who has gonorrhoea, in order to prevent gonococcal conjunctivitis [Described 1860. After Karl Sigmund Franz Credé (1819–92), German gynaecologist.]

**creeping eruption** /,kri:pɪŋ ɪ'tʌrʃən/ *noun* an itching skin complaint, caused by larvae of various parasites which creep under the skin

**crepitation** /,krepi'teɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* an unusual soft crackling sound heard in the lungs through a stethoscope. Also called **rale**

**crepitus** /'krepi'təs/ *noun* a harsh crackling sound heard through a stethoscope in a person with inflammation of the lungs

**crest** /krest/ *noun* a long raised part on a bone

**crest of ilium** /,krest əv 'iliəm/ *noun* same as **iliac crest**

**Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease** /,kroʊtsfelt 'jækəb dɪ,zɪz/ *noun* a disease of the nervous system caused by a slow-acting prion which eventually affects the brain. It may be linked to BSE in cows. Abbreviation **CJD**. ♯ **variant CJD** [Described 1920 by H.G. Creutzfeldt (1885–1964); 1921 by A.M. Jakob (1884–1931), German psychiatrists]

**cribriform** /'kribrɪfɔ:m/ *adjective* having small holes like a sieve

**cribriform plate** /'kribrɪfɔ:m pleɪt/ *noun* the top part of the ethmoid bone which forms the roof of the nasal cavity and part of the roof of the eye sockets

**cricoid** /'kraɪkɔɪd/ *adjective* relating to the lowest part of the cartilage of the larynx

**cricoid cartilage** /,kraɪkɔɪd 'kɑ:təlɪdʒ/ *noun* ring-shaped cartilage in the lower part of the larynx. See illustration at **LUNGS** in Supplement

**cri-du-chat syndrome** /,kri: dʒu: 'ʃɑ: ,sɪndrəʊm/ *noun* a congenital condition, caused by loss of part of chromosome 5, which is characterised in babies by a cry suggestive of that of a cat

**Crigler-Najjar syndrome** /,kriɡlə 'nædʒɑ: ,sɪndrəʊm/ *noun* a genetically controlled condition in which bilirubin cannot be formed, leading to jaundice or even brain damage

**crista** /'kristə/ *noun* 1. a ridge, e.g. the border of a bone 2. a fold in the inner membrane of a mitochondrion (NOTE: The plural is **cristae**.)

**crista galli** /,kristə 'gælɑ/ *noun* a projection from the ethmoid bone

**criterion** /kraɪ'tɪəriən/ *noun* an accepted standard used in making a decision or judgment about something (NOTE: The plural is **criteria**.)

**critical care** /,krittɪk(ə)l 'keə/ *noun* specialist nursing and medical treatment given to patients who are critically ill

**critical list** /'krittɪk(ə)l lɪst/ *noun* the list of patients in a hospital whose condition is medically life-threatening

**CRNA** *abbreviation* certified registered nurse anaesthetist

**Crohn's disease** /'krəʊnz dɪ,zɪz/ *noun* a persistent inflammatory disease, usually of the lower

intestinal tract, characterised by thickening and scarring of the intestinal wall and obstruction [Described 1932. After Burrill Bernard Crohn (1884–1983), New York physician.]

COMMENT: No certain cause has been found for Crohn's disease, where only one section of the intestine becomes inflamed and can be blocked.

**cromolyn sodium** /,krəʊməlɪn 'səʊdiəm/ *noun* a drug that helps to prevent the release of histamine and other substances which cause many of the symptoms of asthma and hay fever

**cross-dresser** /,krɒs 'dresə/ *noun* someone who wears clothes usually worn by people of the opposite sex, e.g. a transvestite

**cross-dressing** /,krɒs 'dresɪŋ/ *noun* the practice of wearing clothes usually worn by people of the opposite sex, e.g. by transvestites

**cross-infection** /,krɒs ɪn'fekʃən/ *noun* an infection passed from one patient to another in hospital, either directly or from nurses, visitors or equipment

**crossmatch** /krɒs'mætʃ/ *verb* (in *transplant surgery*) to match a donor to a recipient as closely as possible to avoid tissue rejection. ♯ **blood group**

**crossmatching** /krɒs'mætʃɪŋ/ *noun* the process of matching a transplant donor to a recipient as closely as possible to avoid tissue rejection

**cross-resistance** /,krɒs rɪ'zɪstəns/ *noun* the development by a disease agent of resistance to a number of similar drugs or chemicals of the same class

**crotamiton** /krə'tæmɪt(ə)n/ *noun* a chemical that kills mites, used to treat scabies

**crotch** /krɒtʃ/ *noun* the point where the legs meet the body, where the genitals are. Also called **crutch**

**croup** /kru:p/ *noun* acute infection of the upper respiratory passages which blocks the larynx, affecting children

**crown** /kraʊn/ *noun* the top part of a tooth above the level of the gums ■ *verb* to put an artificial crown on a tooth

**crowning** /'kraʊnɪŋ/ *noun* 1. the act of putting an artificial crown on a tooth 2. a stage in childbirth in which the top of the baby's head becomes visible

**cruciate** /'kru:ʃiət/ *adjective* shaped like a cross

**cruciate ligament** /,kru:ʃiət 'lɪɡəmənt/ *noun* any ligament shaped like a cross, especially either of two ligaments behind the knee which prevent the knee from bending forwards

**crude death rate** /,kru:d 'deθ ,reɪt/ *noun* the number of deaths in a year, divided by the total population

**crura** plural of **crus**



**crural** /'krʊərəl/ *adjective* referring to the thigh, leg or shin

**crura of the diaphragm** /,krʊərə əv ðə 'daɪəfræm/ *plural noun* the long muscle fibres joining the diaphragm to the lumbar vertebrae

**crus** /krʌs/ *noun* a long projecting part (NOTE: The plural is **crura**.)

**crus cerebri** /,krʌs 'serɪbraɪ/ *noun* each of the nerve tracts between the cerebrum and the medulla oblongata (NOTE: The plural is **crura cerebri**.)

**crush fracture** /'krʌʃ ,fræktʃəl/ *noun* a fracture by compression of the bone

**crush syndrome** /'krʌʃ ,sɪndrəʊm/ *noun* a condition in which a limb has been crushed, as in an accident, causing kidney failure and shock

**crutch** /krʌtʃ/ *noun* **1.** a strong support for someone with an injured leg, formed of a stick with a T-bar which fits under the armpit, especially formerly, or a holding bar and elbow clasp **2.** same as **crotch**

**cry-** /kraɪ/ *prefix* same as **cryo-** (used before vowels)

**cryaesthesia** /,kraɪi:s'θi:ziəl/ *noun* the fact of being sensitive to cold

**cryo-** /kraɪəʊ/ *prefix* cold

**cryobank** /'kraɪəʊbæŋk/ *noun* a place where biological material such as semen and body tissue can be stored at extremely low temperatures

**cryoprecipitate** /,kraɪəʊprɪ'sɪpɪtət/ *noun* a precipitate such as from blood plasma, which separates out on freezing and thawing

**cryoprobe** /'kraɪəʊprəʊb/ *noun* an instrument used in cryosurgery with a tip that is kept very cold to destroy tissue

**cryosurgery** /,kraɪəʊ'sɜ:dʒəri/ *noun* surgery which uses extremely cold instruments to destroy tissue

**cryotherapy** /,kraɪəʊ'θerəpi/ *noun* treatment using extreme cold, as in removing a wart with dry ice

**crypt** /krɪpt/ *noun* a small cavity in the body

**crypto-** /krɪptəʊ/ *prefix* hidden

**cryptococcal meningitis** /,krɪptəkək(ə)l menɪn'dʒaɪtɪs/ *noun* a form of meningitis that is a feature of cryptococcosis

**cryptococcosis** /,krɪptəkəkə'kəʊsɪs/ *noun* an infection mainly affecting the brain or nervous system, caused by the fungus *Cryptococcus neoformans*. It occurs most often in people with HIV infection.

**cryptomenorrhoea** /,krɪptəməne'rɪ:əl/ *noun* the retention of menstrual flow, usually caused by an obstruction

**cryptorchidism** /krɪp'tɔ:kɪdɪz(ə)m/, **cryptorchism** /krɪp'tɔ:kɪz(ə)m/ *noun* a condition in a young male in which the testicles do not move down into the scrotum

**cryptosporidia** /,krɪptəʊspə'ɪdɪə/ *plural of cryptosporidium*

**cryptosporidiosis** /,krɪptəʊspə'ɪdɪ'əʊsɪs/ *noun* an infectious condition of humans and domestic animals, spread by an intestinal parasite *Cryptosporidium parvum*. Its symptoms are fever, diarrhoea and stomach cramps.

**cryptosporidium** /,krɪptəʊspə'ɪdɪəm/ *noun* a parasite which contaminates drinking water supplies, causing intestinal infection (NOTE: The plural is **cryptosporidia**.)

**crypts of Lieberkühn** /,krɪpts əv 'li:bəku:n/ *plural noun* tubular glands found in the mucous membrane of the small and large intestine, especially those between the bases of the villi in the small intestine. Also called **Lieberkühn's glands** [Described 1745. After Johann Nathaniel Lieberkühn (1711–56), Berlin anatomist and physician.]

**CSF** *abbreviation* cerebrospinal fluid

**CT** *abbreviation* computed tomography

**CT scan** /,si: 'ti: skæn/ *noun* a computer picture of a slice of the body or an organ produced by a CT scanner. Also called **CAT scan**

**cubital** /'kju:ɪt(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to the ulna

**cubitus** /'kju:ɪtəs/ *noun* same as **ulna**

**cuboid** /'kju:bɔɪd/, **cuboid bone** /'kju:bɔɪd bəʊn/ *noun* one of the tarsal bones in the foot. See illustration at **FOOT** in Supplement

**cuff** /kʌf/ *noun* an inflatable ring put round the arm and inflated when blood pressure is being measured

**cuirass respirator** /kwɪ,ræs 'respɪrɪtəʊ/ *noun* a type of artificial respirator which surrounds only the chest

**culdoscope** /'kʌldəʊskəʊp/ *noun* an instrument used to inspect the interior of a woman's pelvis, introduced through the vagina

**culdoscopy** /kʌl'dəʊskəpi/ *noun* an examination of the interior of a woman's pelvis using a culdoscope

**culture** /'kʌltʃə/ *noun* **1.** the shared values and behaviour of a group **2.** microorganisms or tissues grown in a culture medium in a laboratory ■ *verb* to grow microorganisms or tissues in a culture medium

**cumulative** /'kju:mjʊlətɪv/ *adjective* growing by adding

**cuneiform** /'kju:nɪfə:m bəʊnz/, **cuneiform bone** /'kju:nɪfə:mz/ *noun* one of the three tarsal bones in the foot. See illustration at **FOOT** in Supplement

**cupola** /'kju:pələ/ *noun* a dome-shaped structure

**curare** /kjʊ'ra:ri/ *noun* a drug derived from South American plants, antagonist to acetylcholine and used surgically to paralyse muscles dur-

ing operations without causing unconsciousness (NOTE: Curare is the poison used to make poison arrows.)

**curettag** /kjuə'retɪdʒ/ *noun* the procedure of scraping the inside of a hollow organ, often the uterus, to remove a growth or tissue for examination. Also called **curettement**

**curette** /kjuə'ret/ *noun* a surgical instrument like a long thin spoon, used for scraping the inside of an organ ■ *verb* to scrape an organ with a curette (NOTE: **curettes** – **curetting** – **curetted**.)

**curettement** /kjuə'retmənt/ same as **curettag**

**curie** /'kjuəri/ *noun* a former unit of measurement of radioactivity, replaced by the becquerel. Symbol **Ci**

**Curling's ulcer** /,kɜ:ɪŋz 'ʌlsə/ *noun* an ulcer of the duodenum following severe injury to the body

**curvature** /'kɜ:vətʃə/ *noun* the way in which something bends from a straight line ○ *greater* or *lesser curvature of the stomach*

**cushingoid** /'kʊʃɪŋɔɪd/ *adjective* showing symptoms of Cushing's disease

**Cushing's disease** /'kʊʃɪŋz dɪ:zi:z/, **Cushing's syndrome** /'kʊʃɪŋz ,sɪndrəʊm/ *noun* a condition in which the adrenal cortex produces too many corticosteroids [Described 1932. After Harvey Williams Cushing (1869–1939), surgeon, Boston, USA.]

**cuspid** /kʌspɪd/ *noun* **1.** the pointed tip of a tooth **2.** a flap of membrane forming a valve in the heart

**cuspid** /'kʌspɪd/ *noun* same as **canine**

**cut** /kʌt/ *noun* **1.** a reduction in the number or amount of something **2.** a place where the skin has been penetrated by a sharp instrument ○ *She had a bad cut on her left leg.* ○ *The nurse will put a bandage on your cut.* ■ *verb* **1.** to make an opening in something using a knife, scissors or other sharp thing ○ *The surgeon cut the diseased tissue away with a scalpel.* ○ *She cut her finger on the broken glass.* **2.** to reduce the number or amount of something ○ *Accidents have been cut by 10%.* (NOTE: **cutting** – **cut**)

**cut-** /kju:t/ *prefix* referring to the skin

**cutaneous** /kju:'teɪniəs/ *adjective* referring to the skin

**cutaneous leishmaniasis** /kju:teɪniəs li:ʃmə'naɪəsɪs/ *noun* a form of skin disease caused by the tropical parasite *Leishmania*. Also called **Delhi boil**

**cutdown** /'kʌtdaʊn/ *noun* the procedure of cutting a vein to insert a cannula or administer an intravenous drug

**cuticle** /'kju:ɪtk(ə)/ *noun* same as **epidermis**

**cutis** /'kju:tɪs/ *noun* the skin

**cutis anserina** /,kju:tɪs 'ænsərəɪnə/ *noun* a reaction of the skin when someone is cold or frightened, the skin being raised into many little bumps by the action of the arrector pili muscles. Also called **goose bumps**

**CVA** *abbreviation* cerebrovascular accident

**cyan-** /saɪən/ *prefix* same as **cyano-** (used before vowels)

**cyanide** /'saɪənaɪd/ *noun* a poison which kills very rapidly when drunk or inhaled

**cyano-** /saɪənəʊ/ *prefix* blue

**cyanocobalamin** /,saɪənəkəʊ'bæləmi:n/ same as **Vitamin B<sub>12</sub>**

**cyanosed** /'saɪənəʊst/ *adjective* with blue skin ○ *The patient was cyanosed round the lips.*

**cyanosis** /,saɪə'nəʊsɪs/ *noun* a condition characterised by a blue colour of the peripheral skin and mucous membranes, a symptom of lack of oxygen in the blood, e.g. in heart or lung disease

**cyanotic** /,saɪə'nɒtɪk/ *adjective* referring to or having cyanosis

**cycle** /'saɪk(ə)/ *noun* a series of events which recur regularly

**cyclic** /'saɪklɪk, 'saɪklɪk/ *adjective* **1.** occurring or repeated in cycles **2.** referring to organic compounds composed of a closed ring of atoms

**cyclical** /'saɪklɪk(ə)/ *adjective* referring to cycles

**-cycline** /saɪklɪn/ *suffix* used in names of antibiotics ○ *tetracycline*

**cyclitis** /sɪ'klaɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the ciliary body in the eye

**cyclo-** /saɪkləʊ/ *prefix* cycles

**cyclodialysis** /,saɪkləʊdɪ'æləsɪs/ *noun* a surgical operation to connect the anterior chamber of the eye and the choroid, as a treatment of glaucoma

**cyclopentolate** /,saɪkləʊ'pentəleɪt/ *noun* a drug used to paralyse the ciliary muscle

**cyclophosphamide** /,saɪkləʊ'fɒsfəmaɪd/ *noun* a drug which suppresses immunity, used in the treatment of leukaemia, lymphoma, Hodgkin's disease and tumours

**cycloplegia** /,saɪkləʊ'pli:dʒə/ *noun* paralysis of the ciliary muscle which makes it impossible for the eye to focus properly

**cyclopropane** /,saɪkləʊ'prəʊpeɪn/ *noun* a flammable hydrocarbon gas used as a general anaesthetic and in organic synthesis

**cylothymia** /,saɪkləʊ'θɑ:miə/ *noun* a mild form of bipolar disorder in which the person experiences alternating depression and excitement

**cyclotomy** /saɪ'klɒtəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to make a cut in the ciliary body (NOTE: The plural is **cyclotomies**.)

**-cyclovir** /saɪkləʊvɪə/ *suffix* used in the names of antiviral drugs

**cyesis** /saɪ'ɪ:ʒɪs/ *noun* same as **pregnancy** (*technical*)

**cyst** /sɪst/ *noun* an unusual growth in the body shaped like a pouch, containing liquid or semi-liquid substances

**cyst-** /sɪst/ *prefix* the bladder

**cystadenoma** /,sɪstədi'nəʊmə/ *noun* an adenoma in which fluid-filled cysts form (NOTE: The plural is **cystadenomas** or **cystadenomata**.)

**cystalgia** /sɪ'stældʒə/ *noun* pain in the urinary bladder

**cystectomy** /sɪ'stektəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to remove all or part of the urinary bladder (NOTE: The plural is **cystectomies**.)

**cystic** /'sɪstɪk/ *adjective* 1. referring to cysts 2. referring to a bladder

**cysticercosis** /,sɪstɪsɜ:'kəʊsɪs/ *noun* a disease caused by infestation of tapeworm larvae from pork

**cystic fibrosis** /,sɪstɪk faɪ'brəʊsɪs/ *noun* a hereditary disease in which there is malfunction of the exocrine glands such as the pancreas, in particular those which secrete mucus, causing respiratory difficulties, male infertility and malabsorption of food from the gastrointestinal tract. Also called **fibrocystic disease**, **mucoviscidosis**

**cystine** /'sɪstɪ:n/ *noun* an amino acid. It can cause stones to form in the urinary system of people who have a rare inherited metabolic disorder.

**cystinosis** /,sɪstɪ'nəʊsɪs/ *noun* a disorder affecting the absorption of amino acids, resulting in excessive amounts of cystine accumulating in the kidneys

**cystinuria** /,sɪstɪ'njuəriə/ *noun* cystine in the urine

**cystitis** /sɪ'staɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the urinary bladder, which makes someone pass water often and with a burning sensation

**cystocele** /'sɪstəsi:l/ *noun* a hernia of the urinary bladder into the vagina

**cystogram** /'sɪstəgræm/ *noun* an X-ray photograph of the urinary bladder

**cystography** /sɪ'stɒgrəfi/ *noun* an examination of the urinary bladder by X-rays after radio-opaque dye has been introduced

**cystolithiasis** /,sɪstəlɪ'θaɪəsɪs/ *noun* a condition in which stones are formed in the urinary bladder

**cystometer** /sɪ'stɒmɪtə/ *noun* an apparatus which measures the pressure in the bladder

**cystometry** /sɪ'stɒmɪtri/ *noun* measurement of the pressure in the bladder

**cystopexy** /sɪ'stɒpeksi/ *noun* a surgical operation to fix the bladder in a different position. Also

called **vesicofixation** (NOTE: The plural is **cystopexies**.)

**cystoplasty** /'sɪstəplæsti/ *noun* a surgical operation on the bladder (NOTE: The plural is **cystoplasties**.)

**cystoscope** /'sɪstəskaʊp/ *noun* an instrument made of a long tube with a light at the end, used to inspect the inside of the bladder

**cystoscopy** /sɪ'stɒskəpi/ *noun* an examination of the bladder using a cystoscope (NOTE: The plural is **cystoscopies**.)

**cystostomy** /sɪ'stɒstəmi/, **cystotomy** /sɪ'stɒtəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to make an opening between the bladder and the abdominal wall to allow urine to pass without going through the urethra. Also called **vesicostomy** (NOTE: The plurals are **cystostomies** and **cystotomies**.)

**cystourethrography** /,sɪstəʊ,jʊə'θrɒgrəfi/ *noun* X-ray examination of the bladder and urethra

**cystourethroscope** /,sɪstəʊjʊ'ri:θrəskəʊp/ *noun* an instrument used to inspect the bladder and urethra

**cyt-** /saɪt/ *prefix* same as **cyto-** (*used before vowels*)

**cyto-** /saɪtəʊ/ *prefix* cell

**cytochemistry** /,saɪtəʊ'kemɪstri/ *noun* the study of the chemical activity of cells

**cytogenetics** /,saɪtəʊdʒə'netɪks/ *noun* a branch of genetics which studies the function of cells, especially chromosomes, in heredity

**cytokine** /'saɪtəʊkaɪn/ *noun* a protein secreted by cells of the lymph system which is involved in controlling response to inflammation

**cytokinesis** /,saɪtəʊkaɪ'ni:ʒɪs/ *noun* changes in the cytoplasm of a cell during division

**cytological smear** /,saɪtəʊlɒdʒɪk(ə)l 'smɪə/ *noun* a sample of tissue taken for examination under a microscope

**cytology** /saɪ'tɒlədʒi/ *noun* the study of the structure and function of cells

**cytolysis** /saɪ'tɒlɪsɪs/ *noun* the breaking down of cells

**cytomegalovirus** /,saɪtəʊ'megələʊ,vɑrəs/ *noun* one of the herpesviruses which can cause serious congenital disorders in a fetus if it infects the pregnant mother. Abbreviation **CMV**

**cytometer** /saɪ'tɒmɪtə/ *noun* an instrument attached to a microscope, used for measuring and counting the number of cells in a specimen

**cytopenia** /,saɪtəʊ'pi:niə/ *noun* a deficiency of cellular elements in blood or tissue

**cytoplasm** /'saɪtəʊplæz(ə)m/ *noun* a substance inside the cell membrane which surrounds the nucleus of a cell

**cytoplasmic** /,saɪtəʊ'plæzmɪk/ *adjective* referring to the cytoplasm of a cell

**cytosine** /ˈsaɪtəʊsiːn/ *noun* one of the four basic chemicals in DNA

**cytosome** /ˈsaɪtəʊsəʊm/ *noun* the body of a cell, not including the nucleus

**cytotoxic** /ˌsaɪtəʊˈtɒksɪk/ *adjective* **1.** referring to a drug or agent which prevents cell divi-

sion **2.** referring to cells in the immune system which destroy other cells

**cytotoxic drug** /ˌsaɪtəʊtɒksɪk ˈdrʌɡ/ *noun* a drug which reduces the reproduction of cells, used to treat cancer

**cytotoxin** /ˌsaɪtəʊˈtɒksɪm/ *noun* a substance which has a toxic effect on cells

# D

**d** *symbol* deci-  
**da** *symbol* deca-

**da Costa's syndrome** /dɑ: 'kɒstəz  
 ˌsɪndrəʊm/ *noun* same as **disordered action of the heart** [Described 1871. After Jacob Mendes da Costa (1833–1900), Philadelphia surgeon, who described this condition in soldiers in the American Civil War.]

**dacryo-** /dækriəʊ/ *prefix* tears

**dacryoadenitis** /ˌdækriəʊædɪ'nائتɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the lacrimal gland

**dacryocystitis** /ˌdækriəʊsɪ'tstائتɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the lacrimal sac when the tear duct, which drains into the nose, becomes blocked

**dacryocystography** /ˌdækriəʊsɪ'tstɔgrəfi/ *noun* contrast radiography to determine the site of an obstruction in the tear ducts

**dacryocystorhinostomy** /ˌdækriəʊ  
 ˌsɪstɔrəɪ'nɒstəmɪ/ *noun* a surgical operation to bypass a blockage from the tear duct which takes tears into the nose. Abbreviation **DCR** (NOTE: The plural is **dacryocystorhinostomies**.)

**dacryolith** /ˌdækriəʊlɪθ/ *noun* a stone in the lacrimal sac

**dacryoma** /ˌdækri'əʊmə/ *noun* a benign swelling in one of the tear ducts (NOTE: The plural is **dacryomas** or **dacryomata**.)

**dactyl** /ˌdæktɪl/ *noun* a finger or toe

**dactyl-** /dæktɪl/ *prefix* same as **dactylo-** (used before vowels)

**dactylitis** /ˌdæktɪ'lائتɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the fingers or toes, caused by bone infection or rheumatic disease

**dactylo-** /dæktɪləʊ/ *prefix* referring to the fingers or toes

**dactylogogy** /ˌdæktɪ'lɒlədʒi/ *noun* signs made with the fingers in place of words when talking to a person who is unable to hear, or when a person who is unable to hear or speak wants to communicate

**dactylomegaly** /ˌdæktɪləʊ'megəli/ *noun* a condition in which a person has longer fingers than usual

**DAH** *abbreviation* disordered action of the heart

**Daltonism** /'dɔ:ltənɪz(ə)m/ *noun* the commonest form of colour blindness, in which someone cannot see the difference between red and green. Also called **protanopia** [Described 1794. After John Dalton (1766–1844), English chemist and physician. Founder of the atomic theory, he himself was colour-blind.]

**D & C** /di: ən/ *abbreviation* dilatation and curettage

**dander** /'dændə/ *noun* very small fragments that fall from the feathers, hair or skin of animals or people

**dandruff** /'dændrʌf/ *noun* pieces of dead skin from the scalp which fall out when the hair is combed. Also called **pityriasis capitis**, **scurf**

**D and V** /ˌdi: ən 'vi: / *abbreviation* diarrhoea and vomiting

**Dandy-Walker syndrome** /ˌdændɪ 'wɔ:kə  
 ˌsɪndrəʊm/ *noun* a congenital condition in which there is no Magendie's foramen in the brain

**dark adaptation** /dɑ:k ˌædæp'teɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the reflex changes which enable the eye to continue to see in dim light. For example, the pupil becomes larger and the rods in the retina become more active than the cones.

**data** /'deɪtə/ *plural noun* information in words or figures about a particular subject, especially information which is available on computer (NOTE: In scientific usage, **data** is used with a plural verb: *The data are accurate*. In everyday language, **data** is often used with a singular verb: *The recent data supports our case*.)

**data bank** /'deɪtə bæŋk/ *noun* a store of information in a computer ○ *The hospital keeps a data bank of information about possible kidney donors*.

**database** /'deɪtəbeɪs/ *noun* a structured collection of information in a computer that can be automatically retrieved and manipulated

**Data Protection Act** /ˌdeɪtə prə'tekʃ(ə)n ˌækt/ *noun* a parliamentary act intended to protect information about individuals that is held on computers. It ensures that all information is stored securely and allows people to have access to their entries.

**daughter** /'dɔ:tə/ *noun* a female child of a parent ○ *They have two sons and one daughter*.

**day blindness** /'deɪ ,blaɪndnəs/ *noun* same as **hemeralopia**

**day care** /'deɪ keə/ *noun* supervised recreation or medical care provided during the day for people who need special help, e.g. some elderly people or small children

**day case** /'deɪ keɪs/ *noun* same as **day patient**

**day case surgery** /'deɪ keɪs ,sɜ:dʒəri/ *noun* same as **day surgery**

**day centre** /'deɪ ,sentə/ *noun* a place providing day care

**day nursery** /'deɪ ,nɜ:s(ə)ri/ *noun* a place where small children can be looked after during the daytime while their parents or guardians are at work

**day patient** /'deɪ ,peɪf(ə)nt/ *noun* a patient who is in hospital for treatment for a day and does not stay overnight. Also called **day case**

**day patient care** /'deɪ ,peɪf(ə)nt ,keə/ *noun* care for patients who are resident in a hospital during the daytime only

**day recovery ward** /,deɪ rɪ'kʌv(ə)ri ,wɔ:d/ *noun* a ward where day patients who have had minor operations can recover before going home

**day surgery** /'deɪ ,sɜ:dʒəri/ *noun* a surgical operation which does not require the patient to stay overnight in hospital. Also called **day case surgery**

**dB** *abbreviation* decibel

**DCR** *abbreviation* dacryocystorhinostomy

**DDS** *abbreviation* US doctor of dental surgery

**DDT** *abbreviation* dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane

**de-** /di:/ *prefix* removal or loss

**dead fingers** /,ded 'fɪŋgəz/, **dead man's fingers** /,ded mænz 'fɪŋgəz/ *noun* same as **Raynaud's disease**

**dead space** /ded speɪs/ *noun* a breath in the last part of the process of breathing in air which does not get further than the bronchial tubes

**deaf** /def/ *adjective* not able to hear in circumstances where most people would. † **hearing-impaired**

**deaf and dumb** /,def ən 'dʌm/ *noun* not able to hear or to speak (NOTE: This term is regarded as offensive.)

**deafness** /'defnəs/ *noun* the fact of being unable to hear in circumstances where most people would

**deamination** /di:,æmɪ'neɪf(ə)n/ *noun* the process by which amino acids are broken down in the liver and urea is formed

**death** /deθ/ *noun* the permanent end of all natural functions

**death rate** /'deθ reɪt/ *noun* the number of deaths per year per thousand of population ○ *The death rate from cancer of the liver has remained stable.*

**debility** /di'bɪlɪti/ *noun* general weakness

**debridement** /di'bri:dmənt/ *noun* the removal of dirt or dead tissue from a wound to help healing

**deca-** /dekə/ *prefix* ten. Symbol **da**

**Decadron** /'dekædrɒn/ a trade name for dexamethasone

**decalcification** /di:,kælsɪfɪ'keɪf(ə)n/ *noun* the loss of calcium salts from teeth and bones

**decannulation** /di:,kænjʊ'leɪf(ə)n/ *noun* the removal of a tracheostomy tube

**decapitation** /di:,kæpɪ'teɪf(ə)n/ *noun* the act or process of cutting off the head of a person or animal

**decapsulation** /di:,kæpsjʊ'leɪf(ə)n/ *noun* a surgical operation to remove a capsule from an organ, especially from a kidney

**decay** /di'keɪ/ *noun* **1.** the process by which tissues become rotten, caused by the action of microorganisms and oxygen **2.** damage caused to tissue or a tooth by the action of microorganisms, especially bacteria ■ *verb (of tissue)* to rot ○ *The surgeon removed decayed matter from the wound.*

**deci-** /desɪ/ *prefix* one tenth (10<sup>-1</sup>) ○ *decigram* Symbol **d**

**decibel** /di'desɪbel/ *noun* a unit of measurement of the loudness of sound, used to compare different levels of sound. Symbol **dB**

**decidua** /di'sɪdʒuəl/ *noun* a membrane which lines the uterus after fertilisation (NOTE: The plural is **deciduas** or **deciduae**.)

COMMENT: The decidua is divided into several parts: the **decidua basalis**, where the embryo is attached, the **decidua capsularis**, which covers the embryo and the **decidua vera** which is the rest of the decidua not touching the embryo. It is expelled after the birth of the baby.

**decidual** /di'sɪdʒuəl/ *adjective* referring to the decidua

**deciduoma** /di,sɪdʒu'əʊmə/ *noun* a mass of decidual tissue remaining in the uterus after birth (NOTE: The plural is **deciduomas** or **deciduomata**.)

**deciduous** /di'sɪdʒuəs/ *adjective* referring to teeth discarded at a later stage of development

**deciduous dentition** /di,sɪdʒuəs den'tɪf(ə)n/ *noun* the set of twenty teeth which are gradually replaced by the permanent teeth as a child grows older

**deciduous tooth** /di'sɪdʒuəs tu:θ/ *noun* same as **primary tooth**

**decilitre** /'desɪlɪ:tə/ *noun* a unit of measurement of liquid equal to one tenth of a litre. Symbol **dl** (NOTE: The US spelling is **deciliter**.)

**decimetre** /'desɪmɪ:tə/ *noun* a unit of measurement of length equal to one tenth of a metre. Symbol **dm** (NOTE: The US spelling is **decimeter**.)

**decompensation** /di:kɒmpən'seɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a condition in which an organ such as the heart cannot cope with extra stress placed on it and so is unable to perform its function properly

**decomposition** /,di:kɒmpə'zɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the process where dead matter is rotted by the action of bacteria or fungi

**decompression** /,di:kəm'preʃ(ə)n/ *noun* **1.** reduction of pressure **2.** a controlled reduction of atmospheric pressure which occurs as a diver returns to the surface

**decompression sickness** /,di:kəm'preʃ(ə)n 'sɪknəs/ *noun* same as **caisson disease**

**decongestant** /,di:kən'dʒestənt/ *adjective* reducing congestion and swelling ■ *noun* a drug which reduces congestion and swelling, sometimes used to unblock the nasal passages

**decontamination** /,di:kəntæm'neɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the removal of a contaminating substance such as radioactive material

**decortication** /di:kɔ:tɪ'keɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the surgical removal of the cortex of an organ

**decrudescence** /,di:kru:'des(ə)ns/ *noun* a reduction in the symptoms of a disease

**decubitus** /dɪ'kju:bitəs/ *noun* the position of a person who is lying down

**decubitus ulcer** /dɪ,kju:bitəs 'ʌlsə/ *noun* same as **bedsore**

**decussation** /,di:kə'seɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the crossing of nerve fibres in the central nervous system. Also called **chiasm**

**deep** /di:p/ *adjective* located, coming from or reaching relatively far inside the body. Opposite **superficial**

**deep cervical vein** /,di:p 'sɜ:vɪk(ə)l ,veɪn/ *noun* a vein in the neck which drains into the vertebral vein

**deep dermal burn** /,di:p 'dɜ:m(ə)l ,bɜ:n/ *noun* a burn which is so severe that a graft will be necessary to repair the skin damage. Also called **full thickness burn**

**deep facial vein** /,di:p 'feɪʃ(ə)l ,veɪn/ *noun* a small vein which drains from the pterygoid process behind the cheek into the facial vein

**deep plantar arch** /,di:p 'plæntər ,ɑ:tʃ/ *noun* a curved artery crossing the sole of the foot

**deep vein** /,di:p 'veɪn/ *noun* a vein which is inside the body near a bone, as opposed to a superficial vein near the skin

**deep-vein thrombosis** /,di:p veɪn θrɒm'bəʊsɪs/ *noun* a condition arising when a thrombus formed in the deep veins of a leg or the pelvis travels to a lung where it may cause death. The condition may affect anyone who is inactive for long periods. Also called **phlebothrombosis**. Abbreviation **DVT**

**defecation** /,defə'keɪʃ(ə)n/, **defaecation** *noun* the act of passing out faeces from the bowels

**defence** /dɪ'fens/ *noun* resistance against an attack of a disease

**defence mechanism** /dɪ'fens ,mekənɪz(ə)m/ *noun* a subconscious reflex by which a person prevents himself or herself from showing emotion

**deferent** /'defərənt/ *adjective* going away from the centre

**defervescence** /,defə'ves(ə)ns/ *noun* a period during which a fever is subsiding

**defibrillation** /di:fɪbrɪ'leɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a procedure to correct an irregular heartbeat by applying a large electrical impulse to the chest wall, especially in potentially life-threatening circumstances. Also called **cardioversion**

**defibrillator** /di:fɪbrɪleɪtə/ *noun* an apparatus used to apply an electric impulse to the heart to make it beat regularly

**defibrination** /di:faɪbrɪ'neɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the removal of fibrin from a blood sample to prevent clotting

**deficiency** /dɪ'fɪʃ(ə)nsɪ/ *noun* a lack of something necessary

**deficit** /'defɪsɪt/ *noun* the amount by which something is less than it should be

**defloration** /,di:flɔ:'reɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the act of breaking the hymen of a virgin, usually at the first sexual intercourse

**deflorescence** /,di:flɔ:'res(ə)ns/ *noun* the disappearance of a rash

**deformans** /di:'fɔ:mənz/ ♦ **osteitis deformans**

**deformity** /dɪ'fɔ:mɪtɪ/ *noun* an unusual shape of part of the body

**degeneration** /dɪ,dʒenə'reɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a change in the structure of a cell or organ so that it no longer works properly

**degenerative disease** /dɪ,dʒen(ə)rətɪv dɪ'zi:z/, **degenerative disorder** /dɪ,dʒen(ə)rətɪv dɪs'ɔ:də/ *noun* a disease or disorder in which there is progressive loss of function of a part of the body, or in which a part of the body fails to repair itself

**deglutition** /,di:glu:'tɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the action of passing food or liquid, and sometimes also air, from the mouth into the oesophagus (*technical*) Also called **swallowing**

**dehiscence** /dɪ'hɪs(ə)ns/ *noun* the act of opening wide

**dehydration** /,di:har'dreɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a dangerous lack of water in the body resulting from inadequate intake of fluids or excessive loss through sweating, vomiting or diarrhoea

**dehydrogenase** /,di:haɪ'drɒdʒəneɪz/ *noun* an enzyme that transfers hydrogen between chemical compounds

**déjà vu** /,deɪʒɑ: 'vu: / *noun* an illusion that a new situation is a previous one being repeated, usually caused by a disease of the brain

**deleterious** /,delɪ'tɪəriəs/ *adjective* damaging or harmful

**Delhi boil** /,delɪ 'bɔɪ/ *noun* same as **cutaneous leishmaniasis**

**delirium** /dɪ'liəriəm/ *noun* a mental state in which someone is confused, excited and restless and has hallucinations

**delirium alcoholicum** /dɪ,liəriəm ,ælkə 'hɒlɪkəm/ *noun* ▶ **delirium tremens**

**delirium tremens** /dɪ,liəriəm 'tri:menz/, **delirium alcoholicum** /dɪ,liəriəm ,ælkə 'hɒlɪkəm/ *noun* a state of mental illness usually found in long-term alcoholics who attempt to give up alcohol consumption. It includes hallucinations about insects, trembling and excitement. Abbreviation **DTS**

**delivery** /dɪ'li:v(ə)ri/ *noun* the birth of a child

**delta** /'deltə/ *noun* the fourth letter of the Greek alphabet

**deltoid** /'deltɔɪd/, **deltoid muscle** /'deltɔɪd ,mʌs(ə)/ *noun* a big triangular muscle covering the shoulder joint and attached to the humerus, which lifts the arm sideways

**delusion** /dɪ'lu:ʒ(ə)n/ *noun* a false belief which a person holds which cannot be changed by reason ○ *He suffered from the delusion that he was wanted by the police.*

**dementia** /dɪ'menʃə/ *noun* the loss of mental ability and memory due to organic disease of the brain, causing disorientation and personality changes

**demi-** /demi/ *prefix* half

**demography** /dɪ'mɒgrəfi/ *noun* the study of populations and environments or changes affecting populations

**demulcent** /dɪ'mʌlsənt/ *noun* a soothing substance which relieves irritation in the stomach

**demyelinating** /dɪ'maɪəneɪtɪŋ/ *adjective* relating to the destruction of the myelin sheath round nerve fibres

**demyelination** /di:məɪə'neɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the destruction of the myelin sheath round nerve fibres, caused, e.g. by injury to the head, or as the main result of multiple sclerosis

**dendrite** /'dendraɪt/ *noun* a branched structure growing out from a nerve cell, which receives impulses from the nerve endings of other nerve cells at synapses. See illustration at **NEURONE** in Supplement. Also called **dendron**

**dendritic** /den'drɪtɪk/ *adjective* referring to a dendrite

**dendron** /'dendrɒn/ *noun* same as **dendrite**

**denervation** /,di:nə'veɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the stopping or cutting of the nerve supply to a part of the body

**dengue** /'dɛŋgi/ *noun* a tropical disease caused by an arbovirus transmitted by mosquitoes, characterised by high fever, pains in the joints, headache and rash. Also called **breakbone fever**

**denial** /dɪ'naɪəl/ *noun* a person's refusal to accept that he or she has a serious medical problem

**Denis Browne splint** /,denɪs braʊn 'splɪnt/ *noun* a metal splint used to correct a club foot [Described 1934. After Sir Denis John Wolko Browne (1892–1967), Australian orthopaedic and general surgeon working in Britain.]

**dens** /denz/ *noun* a tooth, or something shaped like a tooth

**dent-** /dent/ *prefix* referring to a tooth or teeth

**dental** /'dent(ə)/ *adjective* referring to teeth or to the treatment of teeth ○ *dental caries* ○ *dental surgeon*

**dental hygiene** /,dent(ə)l 'haɪdʒi:n/ *noun* procedures to keep the teeth clean and healthy

**dental impaction** /,dent(ə)l ɪm'pækʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a condition in which a tooth is closely pressed against other teeth and cannot grow normally

**dental plate** /'dent(ə)l plɛt/ *noun* a prosthesis made to the shape of the mouth, which holds artificial teeth

**dental prosthesis** /,dent(ə)l prɒs'thi:si:s/ *noun* one or more false teeth

**dentine** /'denti:n/ *noun* a hard substance which surrounds the pulp of teeth, beneath the enamel

**dentistry** /'dentɪstri/ *noun* the profession of a dentist, or the branch of medicine dealing with teeth and gums

**dentition** /den'tɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the number, arrangement and special characteristics of all the teeth in a person's jaws

COMMENT: Children have incisors, canines and molars, which are replaced over a period of years by the permanent teeth: eight incisors, four canines, eight premolars and twelve molars, the last four molars being called the wisdom teeth.

**dentoid** /'dentɔɪd/ *adjective* shaped like a tooth

**denture** /'dentʃə/ *noun* a set of false teeth, fixed to a device which fits inside the mouth

**deodorant** /di'əʊd(ə)rənt/ *noun* a substance which hides or prevents unpleasant smells ■ *adjective* hiding or preventing odours

**deontology** /,di:ɒn'tɒlədʒi/ *noun* the ethics of duty and of what is morally right or wrong

**deoxygenate** /di:'ɒksɪdʒəneɪt/ *verb* to remove oxygen from something

**deoxygenated blood** /di:'ɒksɪdʒəneɪt 'blʌd/ *noun* blood from which most of the oxy-



gen has been removed by the tissues. It is darker than arterial oxygenated blood. Also called **venous blood**. Compare **deoxygenated blood**  
**deoxyribonucleic acid** /diː,ɒksɪraɪbəʊnjuː,ˌkleɪnɪk ˈæsɪd/ *noun* full form of **DNA**. ▶ **RNA**

**Department of Health** /diː,puːtmənt əv ˈhelθ/ *noun* in the UK, the government department in charge of health services. Abbreviation **DH**

**dependant** /dɪˈpendənt/ *noun* a person who is looked after or supported by someone else ○ *He has to support a family of six children and several dependants.*

**dependence** /dɪˈpendəns/, **dependency** /dɪˈpendənsi/ *noun* the fact of needing the support of something or someone such as a carer, nurse or doctor, or of being addicted to a drug

**dependent** /dɪˈpendənt/ *adjective* **1.** needing the support of someone or something **2.** addicted to a drug **3.** referring to a part of the body which is hanging down

**dependent relative** /dɪˌpendənt ˈrelatɪv/ *noun* a person who is looked after by another member of the family

**depersonalisation** /diː,ɪpːsɪ(ə)n(ə)laɪ ˈzeɪʃ(ə)n/, **depersonalization** *noun* a psychiatric state in which someone does not believe he or she is real

**depilation** /,deɪpɪˈleɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the removal of hair

**depilatory** /dɪˈpɪlət(ə)rɪ/ *noun* a substance which removes hair ■ *adjective* removing hair

**Depo-Provera** a trademark for a progesterone derivative used in birth control and the treatment of endometriosis which is administered by three-monthly injection

**depressant** /dɪˈpres(ə)nt/ *noun* a drug which reduces the activity of part of the body, e.g. a tranquilliser

**depressed** /dɪˈprest/ *adjective* **1.** experiencing a mental condition that prevents someone from carrying out the normal activities of life in the usual way □ **clinically depressed** Same as **depressed** **2.** feeling miserable and worried (*informal*) ○ *He was depressed after his exam results.* **3.** referring to something such as a metabolic rate which is below the usual level

**depressed fracture** /dɪˌprest ˈfræktʃə/ *noun* a fracture of a flat bone such as those in the skull where part of the bone has been pushed down lower than the surrounding parts

**depression** /dɪˈpres(ə)n/ *noun* **1.** a mental condition that prevents someone from carrying out the normal activities of life in the usual way **2.** a hollow on the surface of a part of the body

**depressor** /dɪˈpresə/ *noun* a muscle which pulls part of the body downwards

**deprivation** /,deɪprɪˈveɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* **1.** the fact of not being able to have something that you need

or want ○ *sleep deprivation* **2.** the lack of basic necessities of life

**deradenitis** /dɪˌrædɪˈnaɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the lymph nodes in the neck

**Dercum's disease** /ˈdɜːkəmz dɪˌzɪːz/ *noun* same as **adiposis dolorosa** [Described 1888. After François Xavier Dercum (1856–1931), Professor of Neurology at Jefferson Medical College, Philadelphia, USA.]

**derealisation** /diːˌrɪələɪˈzeɪʃ(ə)n/, **derealization** *noun* a psychological state in which someone feels the world around him or her is not real  
**derm-** /dɜːm/ *prefix* same as **derma-** (*used before vowels*)

**-derm** /dɜːm/ *suffix* skin

**derma-** /dɜːmə/ *prefix* skin

**dermal** /ˈdɜːm(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to the skin

**dermatitis** /,dɜːməˈtaɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the skin

**dermato-** /dɜːmətəʊ/ *prefix* referring to the skin

**dermatochalasis** /,dɜːmətəʊkəˈlæsɪs/ *noun* a condition where a fold of skin moves down over the eyelid, common in older people

**dermatological** /,dɜːmətəˈlɒdʒɪk(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to dermatology

**dermatologist** /,dɜːməˈtɒlədʒɪst/ *noun* a doctor who specialises in the study and treatment of the skin and its diseases

**dermatology** /,dɜːməˈtɒlədʒɪ/ *noun* the study and treatment of the skin and its diseases

**dermatome** /ˈdɜːmətəʊm/ *noun* **1.** a special knife used for cutting thin sections of skin for grafting **2.** an area of skin supplied by one spinal nerve

**dermatomycosis** /,dɜːmətəʊmaɪˈkəʊsɪs/ *noun* a skin infection caused by a fungus that is not a dermatophyte

**dermatomyositis** /,dɜːmətəʊmaɪəʊˈsaɪtɪs/ *noun* a collagen disease with a wasting inflammation of the skin and muscles

**dermatophyte** /ˈdɜːmətəʊfaɪt/ *noun* a fungus belonging to one of three genera which affect the skin or hair, causing tinea

**dermatophytosis** /,dɜːmətəʊfaɪˈtəʊsɪs/ *noun* a fungal infection of the skin caused by a *dermatophyte*

**dermatoplasty** /ˈdɜːmətəʊplæstɪ/ *noun* a skin graft, replacing damaged skin by skin taken from another part of the body or from a donor

**dermatosis** /,dɜːməˈtəʊsɪs/ *noun* a disease of the skin

**dermis** /ˈdɜːmɪs/ *noun* a thick layer of living skin beneath the epidermis. Also called **corium**

**dermo-** /dɜːməʊ/ *prefix* same as **derma-**

**dermoid** /ˈdɜːmɔɪd/ *adjective* **1.** referring to the skin **2.** like skin

**Descemet's membrane** /deʃə'mets ,membreɪn/ *noun* one of the deep layers of the cornea [Described 1785. After Jean Descemet (1732–1810), French physician; Professor of Anatomy and Surgery in Paris.]

**descending aorta** /dɪ,sendɪŋ eɪ'ɔ:tə/ *noun* the second section of the aorta, which turns downwards. Compare **ascending aorta**

**descending colon** /dɪ,sendɪŋ 'kəʊlən/ *noun* the third section of the colon which goes down the left side of the body. Compare **ascending colon**. See illustration at **DIGESTIVE SYSTEM** in Supplement

**desensitisation** /dɪ,sensɪtaɪ'zeɪʃ(ə)n/, **desensitization** *noun* the act of making someone or something no longer sensitive to something such as an allergen

**designer drug** /dɪ'zɑɪnə drʌg/ *noun* a drug that has been modified to enhance its properties (*informal*)

**desogestrel** /,desə'dʒestrel/ *noun* a hormone used as an oral contraceptive

**desquamation** /,deskwə'meɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the continual process of losing the outer layer of dead skin

**detached retina** /dɪ,tætʃt 'retɪnə/ *noun* a condition in which the retina becomes partially separated from the eyeball, causing loss of vision. Also called **retinal detachment**

COMMENT: A detached retina can be caused by a blow to the eye, or simply is a condition occurring in old age. If left untreated the eye will become blind. A detached retina can sometimes be attached to the choroid again using lasers.

**detergent** /dɪ'tɜ:dʒənt/ *noun* a cleaning substance which removes grease and bacteria

**deterioration** /dɪ,tɪəriə'reɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the fact of becoming worse ○ *The nurses were worried by the deterioration in the patient's reactions.*

**detox** /'dɪ:tɒks/ *noun* same as **detoxication** (*informal*)

**detoxication** /dɪ,tɒksɪ'keɪʃ(ə)n/, **detoxification** /dɪ,tɒksɪfɪ'keɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the removal of toxic substances to make a poisonous substance harmless

**detrition** /dɪ'trɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the fact of wearing away by rubbing or use

**detritus** /dɪ'traɪtəs/ *noun* rubbish produced when something disintegrates

**detrusor muscle** /dɪ'tru:zə ,mʌs(ə)/ *noun* the muscular coat of the urinary bladder

**detumescence** /,dɪ:tju:'mes(ə)ns/ *noun 1. (*of the penis or clitoris after an erection or orgasm*) the process of becoming limp 2. (*of a swelling*) the process of disappearing*

**deuteranopia** /,dju:tərə'nəʊpiə/ *noun* a form of colour blindness in which someone cannot see green

**develop** /dɪ'veləp/ *verb* 1. to become larger and stronger, or more complex ○ *The embryo is developing normally.* ○ *A swelling developed under the armpit.* ○ *The sore throat developed into an attack of meningitis.* 2. to make something start to happen ○ *We're developing a new system for dealing with admission to A & E.* 3. to make something start to grow or become larger, stronger or more complex ○ *He does exercises to develop his muscles.* 4. to start to have an illness ○ *The baby may be developing a cold.*

**development** /dɪ'veləpmənt/ *noun* 1. the process of growing, or of becoming larger and stronger, or more complex ○ *The development of the embryo takes place in the uterus.* 2. something which happens and causes a change in a situation ○ *Report any developments to me at once.*

**developmental delay** /dɪ'veləpmənt(ə)l dɪ ,leɪ/ *noun* the fact of being later than usual in developing, either physically or psychologically

**deviance** /'di:vɪəns/ *noun* sexual behaviour which is considered unusual

**deviated nasal septum** /,di:vɪeɪtɪd ,neɪz(ə)l 'septəm/, **deviated septum** /,di:vɪeɪtɪd 'septəm/ *noun* an unusual position of the septum of the nose which may block the nose and cause nosebleeds

**deviation** /,di:vɪ'eɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* 1. the fact of being different from what is usual or expected or something which is different from what is usual or expected 2. an unusual position of a joint or of the eye, as in strabismus

**dexamethasone** /,deksə'meθəsəʊn/ *noun* a synthetic steroid drug that is used to treat inflammation and hormonal imbalances

**Dexa scan** /'deksə skæn/ *noun* a technique to assess changes in someone's bone density, as in osteoporosis or in Paget's disease. Full form **Dual Energy X-Ray Absorptiometry**

**dextro-** /dekstrəʊ/ *prefix* referring to the right, or the right side of the body

**dextromoramide** /,dekstrə'mɔ:rəmaɪd/ *noun* an opioid drug used to reduce pain

**dextrose** /'dekstrəʊz/ *noun* same as **glucose**

**DH** *abbreviation* Department of Health

**DI** *abbreviation* donor insemination

**di-** /daɪ/ *prefix* two, double

**dia-** /daɪə/ *prefix* 1. through or throughout 2. across 3. in different or opposite directions 4. apart

**diabetes** /,daɪə'bɪ:tɪz/ *noun* 1. one of a group of diseases which cause the body to produce large amounts of urine. † **gestational diabetes** 2. same as **diabetes mellitus**

**diabetes insipidus** /daɪə'bɪ:tɪz ɪn'sɪpɪdəs/ *noun* a rare disorder of the pituitary gland causing an inadequate amount of the hormone vasopressin, which controls urine production, to be

produced, leading to excessive passing of urine and extreme thirst

**diabetes mellitus** /daɪəˈbi:tɪz 'melɪtəs/ *noun* a disease where the body cannot control sugar absorption because the pancreas does not secrete enough insulin

COMMENT: Diabetes mellitus has two forms: Type I may have a viral trigger caused by an infection which affects the cells in the pancreas which produce insulin; Type II is caused by a lower sensitivity to insulin, is common in older people, and is associated with obesity. Symptoms of diabetes mellitus are tiredness, unusual thirst, frequent passing of water and sweet-smelling urine. Blood and urine tests show high levels of sugar. Treatment for Type II diabetes involves keeping to a strict diet and reducing weight, and sometimes the use of oral hypoglycaemic drugs such as glibenclamide. Type I diabetes is treated with regular injections of insulin.

**diabetic cataract** /,daɪəbetɪk 'kætərækt/ *noun* a cataract which develops in people who have diabetes

**diabetic coma** /,daɪəbetɪk 'kəʊmə/ *noun* a state of unconsciousness caused by untreated diabetes

**diabetic retinopathy** /,daɪəbetɪk reti 'nɒrəθi/ *noun* a disease of the retina, caused by diabetes

**diabetogenic** /,daɪəbetə'dʒenɪk/ *adjective* which causes diabetes

**diabetologist** /,daɪəbe'tɒlədʒɪst/ *noun* a doctor specialising in the treatment of diabetes mellitus

**diaclasia** /,daɪə'kleɪziə/ *noun* a fracture made by a surgeon to repair an earlier fracture which has set badly, or to correct a deformity

**diadochokinesis** /daɪ.ædəkəkəɪ'nɪ:sɪs/ *noun* the natural ability to make muscles move limbs in opposite directions

**diagnosis** /,daɪəg'nəʊsɪs/ *noun* the act of diagnosing a condition or illness ○ *The doctor's diagnosis was a viral infection, but the child's parents asked for a second opinion.* ○ *They found it difficult to make a diagnosis.* Compare **prognosis** (NOTE: The plural is **diagnoses**.)

**diagnostic** /,daɪəg'nɒstɪk/ *adjective* referring to diagnosis

**diagnostic and treatment centre** /,daɪəg'nɒstɪk ən 'tri:tɪmənt ,sentə/ *noun* a facility mainly for day surgery or short-term stay, where a range of planned operations such as joint replacements, hernia repair and cataract removal can be undertaken. Abbreviation **DTC**

**diagnostic radiographer** /daɪəg,nɒstɪk ,reɪdɪ'ɒgrəf/ *noun* ▶ **radiographer**

**dialysate** /daɪ'æɪlɪsət/ *noun* material which is subjected to dialysis

**dialyser** /'daɪələɪzə/ *noun* an apparatus which uses a membrane to separate solids from liquids, e.g. a kidney machine

**dialysis** /daɪ'æɪləsɪs/ *noun* **1.** a procedure in which a membrane is used as a filter to separate soluble waste substances from the blood **2.** same as **renal dialysis**

**diapedesis** /,daɪəpɪ'di:ɪsɪs/ *noun* the movement of white blood cells through the walls of the capillaries into tissues in the development of inflammation

**diaphoresis** /,daɪəfə'ri:sɪs/ *noun* excessive perspiration

**diaphoretic** /,daɪəfə'retɪk/ *noun* a drug which causes sweating ■ *adjective* causing sweating

**diaphragm** /'daɪəfræm/ *noun* **1.** a thin layer of tissue stretched across an opening, especially the flexible sheet of muscle and fibre which separates the chest from the abdomen and moves to pull air into the lungs in respiration **2.** same as **vaginal diaphragm**

**diaphragmatic** /,daɪəfræg'mætɪk/ *adjective* referring to a diaphragm, or like a diaphragm

**diaphyseal** /,daɪə'fɪziəl/ *adjective* referring to a diaphysis

**diaphysis** /daɪ'æfɪsɪs/ *noun* the long central part of a long bone. Also called **shaft**. See illustration at **BONE MARROW** in Supplement

**diaphysitis** /,daɪəfə'saɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the diaphysis, often associated with rheumatic disease

**diarrhoea** /,daɪə'ri:ə/ *noun* a condition in which someone frequently passes liquid faeces ○ *attack of diarrhoea* ○ *mild/severe diarrhoea*

**diarthrosis** /,daɪə'tθərəʊsɪs/ *noun* same as **synovial joint**

**diastase** /'daɪəsteɪz/ *noun* an enzyme which breaks down starch and converts it into sugar

**diastasis** /,daɪə'steɪsɪs/ *noun* a condition in which a bone separates into parts

**diastema** /,daɪə'sti:mə/ *noun* **1.** an unusually wide space between adjacent teeth **2.** an unusual gap in any body part or organ

**diastolic** /,daɪə'stɒlɪk/ *adjective* relating to the diastole

**diastolic pressure** /,daɪəstɒlɪk 'preʃə/ *noun* blood pressure taken at the diastole (NOTE: Diastolic pressure is always lower than systolic.)

**diathermy** /,daɪə'θɜ:mi/ *noun* the use of high-frequency electric current to produce heat in body tissue

**diathermy needle** /daɪə,θɜ:mi 'ni:d(ə)/ *noun* a needle used in surgical diathermy

**diathermy snare** /,daɪə'θɜ:mi sneə/ *noun* a snare which is heated by electrodes and burns away tissue

**diathesis** /daɪ'æθəʊsɪs/ *noun* the general inherited constitution of a person in relation to their susceptibility to specific diseases or allergies

**diazepam** /daɪ'æzəpæm/ *noun* a tranquilliser used in the short term to treat anxiety and as a muscle relaxant. In the long term it is potentially addictive.

**diazoxide** /,daɪə'zɒksaɪd/ *noun* a drug used as a vasodilator, to reduce hypertension

**DIC** *abbreviation* disseminated intravascular coagulation

**dicephalus** /daɪ'sefələs/ *noun* a fetus with two heads

**dichlorphenamide** /,daɪklɔ:'fenəmaɪd/ *noun* a drug used to treat glaucoma

**dichromatism** /,daɪkrəʊ'mætɪz(ə)m/ *noun* colour blindness in which only two of the three primary colours can be seen. Compare **monochromatism**, **trichromatism**

**diclofenac sodium** /,daɪkləʊfenæk'səʊdiəm/ *noun* an anti-inflammatory drug used to treat rheumatic disease

**dicrotism** /'daɪkrətɪz(ə)m/ *noun* a condition in which the pulse occurs twice with each heartbeat

**die** /daɪ/ *verb* to stop living ○ *His father died last year.* ○ *She died in a car crash.* (NOTE: **dying** – **died**)

**diet** /'daɪət/ *noun* the amount and type of food eaten ○ *a balanced diet* ■ *verb* to reduce the quantity of food you eat, or to change the type of food you eat, in order to become thinner or healthier ○ *He is dieting to try to lose weight.*

**dietary** /'daɪət(ə)rɪ/ *noun* a system of nutrition and energy ○ *The nutritionist supervised the dietaries for the patients.* ■ *adjective* referring to a diet

**dietary fibre** /'daɪət(ə)rɪ 'faɪbəl/ *noun* fibrous matter in food, which cannot be digested. Also called **roughage**

COMMENT: Dietary fibre is found in cereals, nuts, fruit and some green vegetables. There are two types of fibre in food: insoluble fibre, e.g. in bread and cereals, which is not digested, and soluble fibre, e.g. in vegetables and pulses. Foods with the highest proportion of fibre include wholemeal bread, beans and dried apricots. Fibre is thought to be necessary to help digestion and avoid developing constipation, obesity and appendicitis.

**dietetic** /,daɪət'etɪk/ *adjective* referring to diets

**dietetics** /,daɪət'etɪks/ *noun* the study of food, nutrition and health, especially when applied to people's food intake

**dietitian** /,daɪət'ɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* someone who specialises in the study of diet, especially someone in a hospital who supervises dietaries as part of the medical treatment of patients

**Dietl's crisis** /'di:t(ə)lz ,kraɪsɪs/ *noun* a painful blockage of the ureter, causing back pressure on the kidney which fills with urine and swells [After Joseph Dietl (1804–78), Polish physician.]

**diet sheet** /'daɪət ʃi:t/ *noun* a list of suggestions for quantities and types of food given to someone to follow

**differential** /,dɪfə'renʃəl/ *adjective* referring to a difference

**differential diagnosis** /,dɪfə'renʃ(ə)l ,daɪəg'nəʊsɪs/ *noun* the identification of one disease from a number of other similar diseases by comparing the range of symptoms of each

**differentiation** /,dɪfə'renʃi'eɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the development of specialised cells during the early embryo stage

**diffuse** /dɪ'fju:z/ *verb* /dɪ'fju:z/ /dɪ'fju:s/; /dɪ'fju:z/ to spread through tissue, or cause something to spread ○ *Some substances easily diffuse through the walls of capillaries.* ■ *adjective* referring to a disease which is widespread in the body, or which affects many organs or cells

**diffusion** /dɪ'fju:z(ə)n/ *noun* the process of mixing a liquid with another liquid, or a gas with another gas

**digest** /daɪ'dʒest/ *verb* to break down food in the alimentary canal and convert it into components which are absorbed into the body

**digestion** /daɪ'dʒestʃən/ *noun* the process by which food is broken down in the alimentary canal into components which can be absorbed by the body

**digestive** /daɪ'dʒestɪv/ *adjective* relating to digestion

**digestive juice** /daɪ'dʒestɪv ju:s/ *noun* ♦ **gastric juice** (usually plural)

**digestive system** /daɪ'dʒestɪv ,sɪstəm/ *noun* the set of organs such as the stomach, liver and pancreas which are associated with the digestion of food. Also called **alimentary system**

**digestive tract** /daɪ'dʒestɪv trækt/ *noun* same as **alimentary canal**

**digit** /'dɪdʒɪt/ *noun* **1.** a finger or a toe **2.** a number

**digitalin** /,dɪdʒɪ'teɪlɪn/, **digitalis** /,dɪdʒɪ'teɪlɪs/ *noun* a drug derived from foxglove leaves, used in small doses to treat heart conditions

**digitalise** /'dɪdʒɪtəlaɪz/, **digitalize** *verb* to treat someone who has heart failure with digoxin

**digital palpation** /,dɪdʒɪt(ə)l pæl'peɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* an examination of part of the body by feeling it with the fingers

**digitoxin** /,dɪdʒɪ'tɒksɪn/ *noun* an extract of foxglove leaves, used as a drug to stimulate the heart in cases of heart failure or irregular heart-beat

**digoxin** /daɪ'dʒɒksɪn/ *noun* an extract of foxglove leaves, which acts more rapidly than digitoxin when used as a heart stimulant

**dihydrocodeine tartrate** /daɪ,haɪdrəʊ,kəʊdi:n 'tɑ:treit/ *noun* an analgesic used to treat severe pain

**dilatation** /,daɪleɪ'teɪf(ə)n/, **dilation** /daɪ'leɪf(ə)n/ *noun* the act of making a hollow space or a passage in the body bigger or wider ○ *dilatation of the cervix during labour*

**dilatation and curettage** /daɪleɪ,tɛɪf(ə)n ən kjuə'reɪtɪdʒ/ *noun* a surgical operation to scrape the interior of the uterus to obtain a tissue sample or to remove products of miscarriage. Abbreviation **D & C**

**dilate** /daɪ'leɪt/ *verb* to become wider or larger, or make something become wider or larger ○ *to dilate the pupil of the eye*

**dilator** /daɪ'leɪtə/ *noun* an instrument used to widen the entrance to a cavity

**dilator pupillae muscle** /daɪ,leɪtə ɒju:'pɪli:'mʌs(ə)l/ *noun* a muscle in the iris which pulls the iris back and so makes the pupil expand

**diltiazem hydrochloride** /dɪl,tɪəzəm ,haɪdrə'klɔ:rɪd/ *noun* a calcium channel blocker used to treat hypertension

**dilute** /'dɪljʊənt/ *noun* a substance which is used to dilute a liquid, e.g. water

**dilute** /daɪ'lu:t/ *adjective* with water added ■ *verb* to add water to a liquid to make it less concentrated ○ *Dilute the disinfectant in four parts of water.*

**dimenhydrinate** /,daɪmen'haɪdrɪneɪt/ *noun* an antihistamine drug that relieves travel sickness

**dimetria** /daɪ'mi:triə/ *noun* a condition in which a woman has a double uterus

**diopre** /daɪ'ɒptə/ *noun* a unit of measurement of the refraction of a lens

**DIP** *abbreviation* distal interphalangeal joint

**diphenoxalate** /,daɪfen'ɒksɪleɪt/ *noun* a drug related to pethidine that is used to treat diarrhoea, sometimes mixed with a little atropine in commercial preparations

**diphtheria** /dɪf'θɪəriə/ *noun* a serious infectious disease of children, caused by the bacillus *Corynebacterium diphtheriae*, characterised by fever and the formation of a fibrous growth like a membrane in the throat which restricts breathing

**diphtheroid** /'dɪfθəɔɪd/ *adjective* referring to a bacterium similar to the diphtheria bacterium

**-dipine** /dɪpɪn/ *suffix* used in the names of calcium channel blockers ○ *nifedipine*

**diplo-** /dɪpl/ *prefix* same as **diplo-** (used before vowels)

**diplocusis** /,dɪplə'kju:sɪs/ *noun* a disorder of the cochlea in which a person hears one sound as two sounds of different pitch

**diplegia** /daɪ'pli:dʒə/ *noun* paralysis of a similar part on both sides of the body, e.g. paralysis of both arms. Compare **hemiplegia**

**diplegic** /daɪ'pli:dʒɪk/ *adjective* referring to diplegia

**diplo-** /dɪpləʊ/ *prefix* double

**diploe** /'dɪpləʊi/ *noun* a layer of spongy bone tissue filled with red bone marrow, between the inner and outer layers of the skull

**diploid** /'dɪplɔɪd/ *adjective* referring to a cell where there are two copies of each chromosome, except the sex chromosome. In humans the diploid number of chromosomes is 46.

**diplopia** /dɪ'pləʊpiə/ *noun* a condition in which someone sees single objects as double. Also called **double vision**

**direct contact** /daɪ,rekt 'kɒntækt/ *noun* a situation where someone or something physically touches an infected person or object

**director** /daɪ'rektə/ *noun* an instrument used to limit the incision made with a surgical knife

**dis-** /dɪs/ *prefix* 1. undoing or reversal 2. removal from 3. lacking or deprived of

**disability** /,dɪsə'bɪlɪti/ *noun* a condition in which part of the body does not function in the usual way and makes some activities difficult or impossible. ⇨ **learning disability**

**Disabled Living Foundation** /dɪs,eɪb(ə)ld 'lɪvɪŋ faʊn,dɛɪf(ə)n/ *noun* a charity which aims to help disabled people live independently

**disarticulation** /,dɪsɑ:tɪkju'leɪf(ə)n/ *noun* the amputation of a limb at a joint, which does not involve dividing a bone

**disc** /dɪsk/ *noun* a flat round structure. ⇨ **intervertebral disc**

**discharge** /dɪs'tʃɑ:dʒ/ *noun* /'dɪstʃɑ:dʒ/ 1. the secretion of liquid from an opening 2. the process of sending a patient away from a hospital because the treatment has ended ■ *verb* 1. to secrete liquid out of an opening ○ *The wound discharged a thin stream of pus.* 2. to send a patient away from hospital because the treatment has ended ○ *He was discharged from hospital last week.*

**discharge planning** /'dɪstʃɑ:dʒ ,plænɪŋ/ *noun* the work of making a plan for when a patient leaves hospital to live at home

**disclosure check** /dɪs'kləʊzə tʃek/ *noun* same as **CRB check**

**discomfort** /dɪs'kʌmfət/ *noun* a feeling of mild pain ○ *You may experience some discomfort after the operation.*

**discrete** /dɪ'skri:t/ *adjective* separate, not joined together

**disease** /dɪ'zi:z/ *noun* a condition that stops the body from functioning in the usual way ○ *an infectious disease* ○ *She is suffering from a very serious disease of the kidneys or from a serious*

kidney disease. ○ *He is a specialist in occupational diseases.* (NOTE: The term **disease** is applied to all physical and mental reactions which make a person ill. Diseases with distinct characteristics have individual names. For other terms referring to disease, see words beginning with **path-**, **patho-**.)

**disfigure** /dɪs'fɪgə/ *verb* to change someone's appearance so as to make it less pleasant to look at ○ *Her legs were disfigured by scars.*

**disinfect** /,dɪsɪn'fekt/ *verb* to make the surface of something or somewhere free from microorganisms ○ *She disinfected the skin with surgical spirit.* ○ *All the patient's clothes have to be disinfected.*

**disinfectant** /,dɪsɪn'fektənt/ *noun* a substance used to kill microorganisms on the surface of something

**disinfection** /,dɪsɪn'fekʃən/ *noun* the removal of microorganisms on the surface of something

COMMENT: The words **disinfect**, **disinfectant**, and **disinfection** are used for substances which destroy microorganisms on instruments, objects or the skin. Substances used to kill microorganisms inside infected people are **antibiotics**.

**disinfestation** /,dɪsɪnfe'steɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the removal of insects or other pests from a place, person or animal

**dislocate** /'dɪsləkeɪt/ *verb* to displace a bone from its usual position at a joint, or to become displaced ○ *He fell and dislocated his elbow.* ○ *The shoulder joint dislocates easily.*

**dislocation** /,dɪslə'keɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a condition in which a bone is displaced from its usual position at a joint. Also called **luxation**

**dismember** /dɪs'membə/ *verb* to cut off or pull off someone's arms or legs, often violently or in an accident

**dismemberment** /dɪs'membəmənt/ *noun* the state of being dismembered

**disordered action of the heart** /dɪs,ɔ:dəd ,æŋkʃən əv ðə 'hɑ:t/ *noun* a condition in which someone has palpitations, breathlessness and dizziness, caused by effort or worry. Also called **da Costa's syndrome**, **cardiac neurosis**. Abbreviation **DAH**

**disorientation** /,dɪs,ɔ:riən'teɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a condition in which someone is confused and does not know where he or she is

**dispensary** /drɪ'spensəri/ *noun* a place where drugs are prepared or mixed and given out according to a doctor's prescription, e.g. part of a chemist's shop or a department in a hospital

**dispensing optician** /drɪ'spensɪŋ ɒp,tɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a person who fits and sells glasses but does not test eyes

**dispensing practice** /drɪ'spensɪŋ ,præktɪs/ *noun* a doctor's practice which dispenses prescribed medicines to its patients

**displace** /dɪs'pleɪs/ *verb* to put something out of its usual place

**displacement** /dɪs'pleɪsmənt/ *noun* the fact of being moved out of the usual position ○ *fracture of the radius together with displacement of the wrist*

**disposition** /,dɪspə'zɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a person's general character or tendency to act in a particular way

**dissect** /daɪ'sekt/ *verb* to cut and separate tissues in a body to examine them

**dissection** /daɪ'sekʃən/ *noun* the action of cutting and separating parts of a body or an organ as part of a surgical operation, an autopsy or a course of study

**disseminated** /drɪ'semɪneɪtɪd/ *adjective* occurring in every part of an organ or in the whole body

**disseminated intravascular coagulation** /drɪ'semɪneɪtɪd ɪntrə,væskələ kəʊ,æɡjʊ 'leɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a disorder that causes extensive clot formation in the blood vessels, followed by severe bleeding. Abbreviation **DIC**

**disseminated sclerosis** /drɪ'semɪneɪtɪd sklə 'rəʊsɪs/ *noun* same as **multiple sclerosis**

**dissemination** /drɪ'semɪ'neɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the fact of being widespread throughout the body

**dissociation** /dɪ,səʊʃi'eɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* 1. the separation of parts or functions 2. (*in psychiatry*) a condition in which part of the consciousness becomes separated from the rest and becomes independent

**dissociative disorder** /drɪ'səʊsɪətɪv dɪs ,ɔ:də/ *noun* a type of hysteria in which someone shows psychological changes such as a split personality or amnesia rather than physical ones

**distal** /'dɪst(ə)l/ *adjective* further away from the centre of a body

**Distalgesic** /,dɪst(ə)l'dʒɪ:zɪk/ a trade name for the analgesic co-proxamol

**distally** /'dɪst(ə)li/ *adverb* placed further away from the centre or point of attachment. Opposite **proximally**. See illustration at **ANATOMICAL TERMS** in Supplement

**distension** /dɪs'tenʃən/ *noun* a condition in which something is swollen ○ *Distension of the veins in the abdomen is a sign of blocking of the portal vein.*

**distichiasis** /,dɪstɪ'kaɪəsɪs/ *noun* the presence of extra eyelashes, sometimes growing on the meibomian glands

**distraction** /drɪ'strækʃən/ *noun* 1. something that takes a person's attention away from something else 2. a state where someone is very emotionally and mentally troubled

**district general hospital** /,dɪstrɪkt ˌdʒen(ə)rəl ˈhɒspɪt(ə)l/ *noun* a hospital which serves the needs of the population of a specific district

**district nurse** /,dɪstrɪkt ˈnɜːs/ *noun* a nurse who visits and treats people in their homes

**disturbed** /dɪˈstɜːbd/ *adjective* affected by a psychiatric disorder ○ *severely disturbed children*

**disulfiram** /daɪˈsʌlfɪræm/ *noun* a drug used to treat alcoholism by causing severe nausea if alcohol is consumed with it

**dithranol** /ˈdɪθrənɒl/ *noun* an anti-inflammatory drug used to treat dermatitis and psoriasis

**diuresis** /,daɪjuˈriːsɪs/ *noun* an increase in the production of urine

**diuretic** /,daɪjuˈreɪtɪk/ *adjective* causing the kidneys to produce more urine ■ *noun* a substance which makes the kidneys produce more urine and, in the treatment of oedema and hypertension

**diurnal** /daɪˈɜːn(ə)l/ *adjective* 1. happening in the daytime 2. happening every day

**divarication** /daɪˌvæɪˈkeɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* 1. separation into widely spread branches 2. the point at which a structure forks or divides

**divergence** /daɪˈvɜːdʒəns/ *noun* 1. a condition in which one eye points directly at the object of interest but the other does not 2. the process of moving apart to follow different courses 3. the amount of difference between two quantities, especially where the difference is unexpected 4. a deviation from a typical behaviour pattern or expressed wish

**divergent strabismus** /daɪˌvɜːdʒənt strəˈbɪzməs/, **divergent squint** /daɪˌvɜːdʒənt ˈskwɪnt/ *noun* a condition in which a person's eyes both look away from the nose. Opposite **convergent strabismus**

**diverticula** /,daɪvəˈtɪkjʊlə/ *plural noun* plural of **diverticulum**

**diverticular disease** /,daɪvəˈtɪkjʊlə dɪˌzɪːz/ *noun* a disease of the large intestine, where the colon thickens and diverticula form in the walls, causing pain in the lower abdomen

**diverticulitis** /,daɪvətɪkjʊˈlaɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of diverticula formed in the wall of the colon

**diverticulosis** /,daɪvətɪkjʊˈləʊsɪs/ *noun* a condition in which diverticula form in the intestine but are not inflamed. In the small intestine, this can lead to blind loop syndrome.

**diverticulum** /,daɪvəˈtɪkjʊləm/ *noun* a little sac or pouch which develops in the wall of the intestine or another organ (NOTE: The plural is **diverticula**.)

**division** /dɪˈvɪʒ(ə)n/ *noun* the action of cutting or splitting into parts

**divulsor** /dɪˈvʌlsə/ *noun* a surgical instrument used to expand a passage in the body

**dizygotic** /,daɪzəˈɡɒtɪk/ *adjective* developed from two separately fertilised eggs

**dizygotic twins** /,daɪzəɡɒtɪk ˈtɪwɪnz/ *plural noun* twins who are not identical and not always of the same sex because they come from two different ova fertilised at the same time. Also called **fraternal twins**

**dizziness** /ˈdɪzɪnəs/ *noun* the feeling that everything is going round because the sense of balance has been affected

**dl** *abbreviation* decilitre

**DLE** *abbreviation* disseminated lupus erythematosus

**dm** *abbreviation* decimetre

**DNA** *noun* one of the nucleic acids, the basic genetic material present in the nucleus of each cell. Full form **deoxyribonucleic acid**. † **RNA**

**DNA fingerprint** /,diː en ɪ ˈfɪŋɡəprɪnt/ *noun* same as **genetic fingerprint**

**DNA fingerprinting** /,diː en ɪ ˈfɪŋɡəprɪntɪŋ/ *noun* same as **genetic fingerprinting**

**DOA** *abbreviation* dead on arrival

**dobutamine** /dəʊˈbjuːtəmiːn/ *noun* a drug used to stimulate the heart

**doctor** /ˈdɒktə/ *noun* a person who has trained in medicine and is qualified to examine people when they are ill to find out what is wrong with them and to prescribe a course of treatment

COMMENT: In the UK surgeons are traditionally not called 'Doctor', but are addressed as 'Mr', 'Mrs', etc. The title 'doctor' is also applied to persons who have a higher degree from a university in a non-medical subject. So 'Dr Jones' may have a degree in music, or in any other subject without a connection with medicine.

**Döderlein's bacillus** /ˈdɜːdələɪnz bəˌsɪləs/ *noun* a bacterium usually found in the vagina [After Albert Siegmund Gustav Döderlein (1860–1941), German obstetrician and gynaecologist.]

**dolicho-** /dɒlɪkəʊ/ *prefix* long

**dolichocephalic** /,dɒlɪkəʊˈfæɪlɪk/ *adjective* referring to a person with an unusually long skull

**dolichocephaly** /,dɒlɪkəʊˈsefəli/ *noun* a condition of a person who has a skull which is longer than usual, the measurement across the skull being less than 75% of the length of the head from front to back

**dolor** /ˈdɒlə/ *noun* pain

**dolorimetry** /,dɒləˈrɪmətri/ *noun* the measurement of pain

**domiciliary** /,dɒmɪˈsɪliəri/ *adjective* at home or in the home

**dominance** /ˈdɒmɪnəns/ *noun* the characteristic of a gene form (**allele**) that leads to the trait

which it controls being shown in any individual carrying it

**dominant** /'dɒmɪnənt/ *adjective* important or powerful ■ *noun* (of an allele) having the characteristic that leads to the trait which it controls being shown in any individual carrying it. Compare **recessive**

**domino booking** /'dɒmɪnəʊ, bʊkɪŋ/ *noun* an arrangement for the delivery of a baby, where the baby is delivered in hospital by a midwife and the mother and child return home soon afterwards

**Donald-Fothergill operation** /,dɒnəld 'fɒðəgɪl ɒpə'reɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* an operation to close the neck of the vagina

**donor** /'dɔʊnə/ *noun* a person who gives blood, tissue, organs or reproductive material to be used to treat another person

**donor card** /'dɔʊnə kɑ:d/ *noun* a card carried by people stating that they give permission for their organs to be transplanted into other people after they have died

**donor insemination** /,dɔʊnə ɪnse'mɪ 'neɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* artificial insemination using the sperm of an anonymous donor. Abbreviation **DI**

**dopa** /'dɔʊpə/ *noun* a chemical related to adrenaline and dopamine. It occurs naturally in the body and in the form levodopa is used to treat Parkinson's disease.

**dopamine** /'dɔʊpəmi:n/ *noun* a substance found in the medulla of the adrenal glands, which also acts as a neurotransmitter. Lack of dopamine is associated with Parkinson's disease.

**dopaminergic** /,dɔʊpə'mɪ'nɜ:dʒɪk/ *adjective* referring to a neurone or receptor stimulated by dopamine

**Doppler transducer** /'dɒplə trænʒ,dju:sə/ *noun* a device to measure blood flow, commonly used to monitor fetal heart rate

**Doppler ultrasound** /,dɒplə 'ʌltrəsaʊnd/ *noun* the use of the Doppler effect in ultrasound to detect red blood cells

**Doppler ultrasound flowmeter** /,dɒplə 'ʌltrəsaʊnd 'fləʊmɪtə/ *noun* a device which measures the flow of blood and detects steady or irregular flow, allowing abnormalities or blockages to be detected

**dorsa** /'dɔ:sə/ plural of **dorsum**

**dorsal** /'dɔ:s(ə)/ *adjective* referring to the back. Opposite **ventral**

**dorsal vertebrae** /,dɔ:s(ə)l 'vɜ:tɪbreɪ/ *plural noun* the twelve vertebrae in the back between the cervical vertebrae and the lumbar vertebrae

**dorsi-** /dɔ:si/ *prefix* referring to the back

**dorsiflexion** /,dɔ:sɪ'flekʃən/ *noun* flexion towards the back of part of the body, e.g. raising the foot at the ankle. Compare **plantar flexion**

**dorso-** /dɔ:səʊ/ *prefix* same as **dorsi-**

**dorsoventral** /,dɔ:səʊ'ventərəl/ *adjective* referring to both the front and the back of the body

**dorsum** /'dɔ:səm/ *noun* the back of any part of the body (NOTE: The plural is **dorsa**.)

**dosage** /'dɔ:sɪdʒ/ *noun* a measured quantity of a drug calculated to be necessary for someone ○ a low dosage ○ The doctor decided to increase the dosage of antibiotics. ○ The dosage for children is half that for adults.

**dose** /dɔ:s/ *noun* **1.** a measured quantity of a drug or radiation which is to be given to someone at one time ○ It is dangerous to exceed the prescribed dose. **2.** a short period of experiencing a minor illness (*informal*) ○ a dose of flu **3.** an infection with a sexually transmitted disease (*informal*) ■ *verb* to provide someone with medication (*informal*) ○ She has been dosing herself with laxatives.

**dosimeter** /dɔ:s'ɪmɪtə/ *noun* an instrument which measures the amount of X-rays or other radiation received

**dosimetry** /dɔ:s'ɪmɪtri/ *noun* the act of measuring the amount of X-rays or radiation received, using a dosimeter

**double-blind randomised controlled trial** /,dʌb(ə)l blaɪnd 'rændəmaɪzɪd kɒn'trəʊld 'trɑ:əl/ *noun* a trial used to test new treatments in which patients are randomly placed in either the treatment or the control group without either the patient or doctor knowing which group any particular patient is in

**double pneumonia** /,dʌb(ə)l nju:'mɔʊniə/ *noun* same as **bilateral pneumonia**

**double uterus** /,dʌb(ə)l 'ju:t(ə)rəs/ *noun* a condition in which the uterus is divided into two sections by a membrane. Also called **uterus didelphys**. ◊ **dimetria**

**double vision** /,dʌb(ə)l 'vɪʒ(ə)n/ *noun* same as **diplopia** (*informal*)

**douche** /du:ʃ/ *noun* a liquid forced into the body to wash out a cavity, or a device used for washing out a cavity

**down below** /,daʊn bɪ'ləʊ/ *adverb* used to refer politely to the genital area (*informal*)

**Down's syndrome** /'daʊnz ,sɪndrəʊm/ *noun* a condition due to the existence of an extra copy of chromosome 21, in which a baby is born with slanting eyes, a wide face, speech difficulties and usually some degree of learning difficulty [Described 1866. After John Langdon Haydon Down (1828–96), British physician at Normansfield Hospital, Teddington, UK]

**downstairs** /daʊn'steɪz/ *adverb* used to refer politely to the genital area (*informal*)

**down there** /,daʊn 'ðeə/ *adverb* used to refer politely to the genital area (*informal*)

**doxepin** /'dɒksɪpɪn/ *noun* a drug used as a sedative and antidepressant



**doxycycline** /,dɒksi'saɪklɪn/ *noun* a widely used antibiotic derived from tetracycline

**DPT** *abbreviation* diphtheria, whooping cough, tetanus

**DPT vaccine** /,di: pi: 'ti: ,væksɪn/, **DPT immunisation** /,di: pi: 'ti: ɪmjʊnə'zeɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a combined vaccine or immunisation against the three diseases, diphtheria, whooping cough and tetanus

**Dr** *abbreviation* doctor (NOTE: used when writing someone's name: *Dr Smith*)

**drachm** /dræm/ *noun* a measure used in pharmacy, equal to 3.8g dry weight or 3.7ml liquid measure

**dracontiasis** /,drækən'taɪəsis/, **dracunculiasis** /drə,kʌŋkjʊ'taɪəsis/ *noun* a tropical disease caused by the guinea worm *Dracunculus medinensis* which enters the body from infected drinking water and forms blisters on the skin, frequently leading to secondary arthritis, fibrosis and cellulitis

**Dracunculus** /drə'kʌŋkjʊləs/ *noun* a parasitic worm which enters the body and rises to the skin to form a blister. The infection frequently leads to secondary arthritis, fibrosis and cellulitis. Also called **guinea worm**

**dragee** /dræ'ʒeɪ/ *noun* a sugar-coated tablet or pill

**drain** /dreɪn/ *noun* a tube to remove liquid from the body ■ *verb* to remove liquid from the body ○ *an operation to drain the sinus* ○ *They drained the pus from the abscess.*

**drainage** /'dreɪnɪdʒ/ *noun* the removal of liquid from the site of an operation or pus from an abscess by means of a tube or wick left in the body for a time

**drape** /dreɪp/ *noun* a thin material used to place over someone about to undergo surgery, leaving the operation site uncovered

**drawn** /drɔ:n/ *adjective* appearing tired and careworn, usually as a result of anxiety, grief or illness

**draw-sheet** /'drɔ: ʃi:t/ *noun* a sheet under a person in bed, folded so that it can be pulled out as it becomes soiled

**drepanocyte** /'dreɪpənəʊsaɪt/ *noun* same as **sickle cell**

**drepanocytosis** /,dreɪpənəʊsaɪ'təʊsɪs/ *noun* same as **sickle-cell anaemia**

**dressings** /'dresɪŋ/ *noun* a covering or bandage applied to a wound to protect it ○ *The patient's dressings need to be changed regularly.*

**drill** /drɪl/ *noun* a tool which rotates very rapidly to make a hole, especially a surgical instrument used in dentistry to remove caries ■ *verb* to make a hole with a drill ○ *A small hole is drilled in the skull.* ○ *The dentist drilled one of her molars.*

**Drinker respirator** /'drɪŋkə ,respəreɪtə/ *noun* a machine which encloses the whole of the body

except the head, and in which air pressure is increased and decreased, so forcing the person to breathe in and out. Also called **iron lung**

**drip** /drɪp/ *noun* a system for introducing liquid slowly and continuously into the body, by which a bottle of liquid is held above a person and the fluid flows slowly down a tube into a needle in a vein or into the stomach ○ *After her operation, the patient was put on a drip.*

**drip feed** /'drɪp fi:d/ *noun* a drip containing nutrients

**drop** /drɒp/ *noun 1. a small quantity of liquid 2. a sudden reduction or fall in the quantity of something ○ *a drop in pressure* ■ *plural noun drops* liquid medicine for the eye, nose, or ear administered with a dropper ■ *verb* 1. to fall or let something fall ○ *Pressure in the artery dropped suddenly.* 2. to reduce suddenly*

**drop attack** /'drɒp ə'tæk/ *noun* a condition in which a person suddenly falls down, though he or she is not unconscious, caused by sudden weakness of the spine

**droperidol** /drɒ'perɪdɒl/ *noun* a drug used to keep someone in a calm state before an operation

**drop foot** /'drɒp fʊt/ *noun* a condition, caused by a muscular disorder, in which the ankle is not strong and the foot hangs limp

**droplet** /'drɒplət/ *noun* a very small quantity of liquid

**droplet infection** /'drɒplət ɪn'fekʃən/ *noun* an infection developed by inhaling droplets containing a virus, e.g. from a sneeze

**dropper** /'drɒpə/ *noun* a small glass or plastic tube with a rubber bulb at one end, used to suck up and expel liquid in drops

**dropsy** /'drɒpsɪ/ *noun* same as **oedema** (*dated*)

**drop wrist** /,drɒp 'rɪst/ *noun* a condition caused by a muscular disorder, in which the wrist is not strong and the hand hangs limp

**drug** /drʌg/ *noun* 1. a natural or synthetic chemical substance which is used in medicine and affects the way in which organs or tissues function 2. a substance taken by choice which produces a strong effect on a person's feelings and state of mind ○ *recreational drug* ○ *controlled drugs*

**drug addict** /'drʌg ,ædɪkt/ *noun* a person who is physically and mentally dependent on taking a particular drug regularly ○ *a heroin addict* ○ *a morphine addict*

**drug addiction** /'drʌg ə'dɪkʃən/ *noun* the fact of being mentally and physically dependent on taking a particular drug regularly. Also called **drug dependence**

**drug allergy** /'drʌg ,ælədʒi/ *noun* a reaction to a particular drug

**drug tolerance** /'drʌg ,tɒləərəns/ *noun* a condition in which a drug has been given to someone

for so long that his or her body no longer reacts to it, and the dosage has to be increased

**dry** /draɪ/ *adjective* **1.** not wet ○ *The surface of the wound should be kept dry.* **2.** containing only a small amount of moisture ○ *She uses a cream to soften her dry skin.* (NOTE: **drier** – **driest**) ■ *verb* to remove moisture from something (NOTE: **dries** – **drying** – **dried**)

**dry beriberi** /,draɪ ˈberiˈberi/ *noun* beriberi associated with loss of feeling and paralysis

**dry-eye syndrome** /,draɪ ˈaɪ ˌsɪndrəʊm/ *noun* same as **xerosis**

**dry out** /,draɪ ˈaʊt/ *verb* **1.** same as **dry 2.** to treat someone for alcoholism, or undergo treatment for alcoholism (*informal*)

**dry socket** /,draɪ ˈsɒkɪt/ *noun* inflammation of the socket of a tooth which has just been removed

**DTC** *abbreviation* diagnostic and treatment centre

**DTs** *abbreviation* delirium tremens

**Duchenne muscular dystrophy** /duːˌʃen ˌmʌskjələ ˈdɪstrəfi/, **Duchenne's muscular dystrophy** /duːˌʃenz ˌmʌskjələ ˈdɪstrəfi/, **Duchenne** /duːˌʃen/ *noun* an inherited form of muscular dystrophy that weakens the muscles of the upper respiratory and pelvic areas. It usually affects boys and causes early death. [Described 1849. After Guillaume Benjamin Arnaud Duchenne (1806–75), French neurologist.]

**Ducrey's bacillus** /duːˌkreɪz bæˈsɪləs/ *noun* a type of bacterium found in the lungs, causing chancroid [Described 1889. After Augusto Ducrey (1860–1940), Professor of Dermatology in Pisa, then Rome, Italy.]

**duct** /dʌkt/ *noun* a tube which carries liquids, especially one which carries secretions

**ductless** /ˈdʌktləs/ *adjective* without a duct

**ductless gland** /,dʌktləs ˈglænd/ *noun* same as **endocrine gland**

**ductule** /ˈdʌktjuːl/ *noun* a very small duct

**ductus** /ˈdʌktəs/ *noun* same as **duct**

**ductus deferens** /,dʌktəs ˈdefərənz/ *noun* one of two tubes along which sperm pass from the epididymus to the seminal vesicles near the prostate gland. Also called **vas deferens**. See illustration at **UROGENITAL SYSTEM (MALE)** in Supplement

**dull** /dʌl/ *adjective* referring to pain which is not strong but which is continuously present ○ *She complained of a dull throbbing pain in her head.* ○ *He felt a dull pain in the chest.* ■ *verb* to make a sensation or awareness of a sensation less sharp ○ *The treatment dulled the pain for a while.* ○ *The drug had dulled her senses.*

**dumbness** /ˈdʌmns/ *noun* same as **mutism**

**dumping syndrome** /ˈdʌmpɪŋ ˌsɪndrəʊm/ *noun* same as **postgastroctomy syndrome**

**duo-** /djuːəʊ/ *prefix* two

**duoden-** /djuːəʊdiːn/ *prefix* referring to the duodenum

**duodenal** /,djuːəʊˈdiːn(ə)/ *adjective* referring to the duodenum

**duodenal papillae** /djuːəʊˈdiːn(ə)l pəˈpɪliː/ *plural noun* small projecting parts in the duodenum where the bile duct and pancreatic duct open

**duodenal ulcer** /djuːəʊˈdiːn(ə)l ˈʌlsə/ *noun* an ulcer in the duodenum

**duodenoscope** /,djuːəʊˈdiːnəʊskəʊp/ *noun* an instrument used to examine the inside of the duodenum

**duodenostomy** /,djuːəʊdiːnɒstəmi/ *noun* a permanent opening made between the duodenum and the abdominal wall

**duodenum** /,djuːəʊˈdiːnəm/ *noun* the first part of the small intestine, going from the stomach to the jejunum. See illustration at **DIGESTIVE SYSTEM** in Supplement

**duplex imaging** /,djuːpleks ˈɪmɪdʒɪŋ/ *noun* a type of ultrasonic imaging where the speed of the flow of blood is measured

**Dupuytren's contracture** /duːˌpwiːtrɛnz kənˈtræktʃəl/ *noun* a condition in which the palmar fascia becomes thicker, causing the fingers, usually the middle and fourth fingers, to bend forwards [Described 1831. After Baron Guillaume Dupuytren (1775–1835), French surgeon.]

**dura** /ˈdʒʊərə/ *noun* same as **dura mater**

**dural** /ˈdʒʊərə(ə)/ *adjective* referring to the dura mater

**dura mater** /,dʒʊərə ˈmeɪtəl/ *noun* the thicker outer membrane of the three covering the brain. Also called **dura**, **pachymeninx**. † **arachnoid**

**duty** /ˈdjuːti/ *noun* the activities which a person has to do as part of their job ○ *What are the duties of a night sister?* (NOTE: The plural is **duties**.) □ **to be on duty** to be working ○ *She's on duty from 2 p.m. till 10 p.m.* □ **a duty of care** the requirement to treat a patient in an appropriate way, as part of the work of being a health professional

**d.v.t., DVT** *abbreviation* deep-vein thrombosis

**dwarfism** /ˈdwɔːfɪz(ə)m/ *noun* a condition in which the growth of a person has stopped, leaving him or her much smaller than average

**dynamic splint** /daɪˌnæmɪk ˈsplɪnt/ *noun* a splint which uses springs to help the person move

**dynamometer** /,daɪnəˈmɒmɪtəl/ *noun* an instrument for measuring the force of muscular contraction

**-dynia** /ˈdɪniə/ *suffix* pain

**dys-** /dɪs/ *prefix* difficult or impaired

**dysaesthesia** /,dɪsɪːsˈθiːziə/ *noun* the impairment of a sense, in particular the sense of touch

**dysarthria** /dɪsˈɑːθriə/, **dysarthrosis** /,dɪsɑːˈθɹəʊsɪs/ *noun* difficulty in speaking words clearly, caused by damage to the central nervous system

**dysbasia** /dɪs'beɪziə/ *noun* difficulty in walking, especially when caused by a lesion to a nerve

**dyschezia** /dɪs'ki:ziə/ *noun* difficulty in passing faeces

**dyschondroplasia** /,dɪskɒndrəu'pleɪziə/ *noun* a condition in which the long bones are shorter than usual

**dyschromatopsia** /,dɪskrəʊmə'tɒpsɪə/ *noun* a condition where someone cannot distinguish colours

**dyscoria** /dɪs'kɔ:riə/ *noun* an unusually shaped pupil of the eye

**dyscrasia** /dɪs'kreɪziə/ *noun* any unusual body condition (*dated*)

**dysdiadochokinesia** /,dɪsdai,ædəkəʊkai'nɪ:siə/, **dysdiadochokinesis** /,dɪsdai,ædəkəʊkai'nɪ:sis/ *noun* the inability to carry out rapid movements, caused by a disorder or lesion of the cerebellum

**dysentery** /'dɪs(ə)ntri/ *noun* an infection and inflammation of the colon, causing bleeding and diarrhoea

**dysfunction** /dɪs'fʌŋkʃən/ *noun* an unusual functioning of an organ

**dysfunctional** /dɪs'fʌŋkʃən(ə)/ *adjective* **1.** not working properly **2.** unable to relate to other people emotionally or socially

**dysfunctional uterine bleeding** /dɪs'fʌŋkʃən(ə)l,ju:tərəm'bli:dɪŋ/ *noun* bleeding in the uterus not caused by a menstrual period

**dysgenesis** /dɪs'dʒenəsɪs/ *noun* unusual development

**dysgerminoma** /dɪs,dʒɜ:mɪ'nəʊmə/ *noun* a malignant tumour of the ovary or testicle

**dysgraphia** /dɪs'græfiə/ *noun* difficulty in writing caused by a brain lesion

**dyskariosis** /dɪs,kæri'əʊsɪs/ *noun* the fact of becoming mature in an unusual way

**dyskinesia** /dɪskaɪ'nɪ:ziə/ *noun* the inability to control voluntary movements

**dyslalia** /dɪs'leɪliə/ *noun* a disorder of speech, caused by an unusual development of the tongue

**dyslexia** /dɪs'leksiə/ *noun* a disorder of development, where a person is unable to read or write properly and confuses letters

**dyslogia** /dɪs'ləʊdʒiə/ *noun* difficulty in putting ideas into words

**dysmaturity** /,dɪsmə'tʃʊərɪti/ *noun* a condition affecting newborn babies, shown by wrinkled

skin, long fingernails and toenails and relatively little body fat

**dysmenorrhoea** /,dɪsmenə'ri:ə/ *noun* pain experienced at menstruation

**dysostosis** /,dɪsɒs'təʊsɪs/ *noun* unusual formation of bones

**dyspareunia** /,dɪspæ'ru:niə/ *noun* difficult or painful sexual intercourse in a woman

**dyspepsia** /dɪs'pepsiə/ *noun* a condition in which a person feels pains or discomfort in the stomach, caused by indigestion

**dysphagia** /dɪs'feɪdʒiə/ *noun* difficulty in swallowing

**dysphasia** /dɪs'feɪziə/ *noun* difficulty in speaking and putting words into the correct order

**dysphemia** /dɪs'fi:miə/ *noun* same as **stammering**

**dysphonia** /dɪs'fəʊniə/ *noun* difficulty in speaking caused by impairment of the vocal cords, or by laryngitis

**dysplasia** /dɪs'pleɪziə/ *noun* an unusual development of tissue

**dyspnoea** /dɪsp'ni:ə/ *noun* difficulty or pain in breathing

**dyspnoeic** /dɪsp'ni:ɪk/ *adjective* difficult or painful when breathing

**dyspraxia** /dɪs'præksiə/ *noun* difficulty in carrying out coordinated movements

**dysrhythmia** /dɪs'riðmiə/ *noun* an unusual rhythm, either in speaking or in electrical impulses in the brain

**dysocial** /dɪs'səʊʃ(ə)/ *adjective* same as **antisocial**

**dysynergia** /,dɪsɪ'nɜ:dʒiə/ *noun* same as **asynergia**

**dystaxia** /dɪs'tæksiə/ *noun* an inability to coordinate the muscles

**dystocia** /dɪs'təʊsiə/ *noun* difficult childbirth

**dystonia** /dɪs'təʊniə/ *noun* disordered muscle tone, causing involuntary contractions which make the limbs deformed

**dystrophia** /dɪs'trəʊfiə/ *noun* the wasting of an organ, muscle or tissue due to lack of nutrients in that part of the body. Also called **dystrophy**

**dystrophia adiposogenitalis** /dɪs'trəʊfiəædi,pəʊsədʒeni'teɪlɪs/ *noun* same as **Fröhlich's syndrome**

**dystrophy** /'dɪstrəfi/ *noun* same as **dystrophia**

**dysuria** /dɪs'juəriə/ *noun* difficulty in passing urine

# E

**ear** /ɪə/ *noun* an organ on the side of the head which is used for hearing (NOTE: For other terms referring to ears, see **auricular** and words beginning with **ot-**, **oto-**.)

**Ear, Nose & Throat** /,ɪə ,nəʊz ən 'θrəʊt/ *noun* the study of the ear, nose and throat. Abbreviation **ENT**. Also called **otorhinolaryngology**

**earache** /'ɪərəɪk/ *noun* pain in the ear. Also called **otalgia**

**ear canal** /'ɪə kə,næl/ *noun* one of several passages in or connected to the ear, especially the external auditory meatus, the passage from the outer ear to the eardrum

**eardrum** /'ɪɒdrəm/ *noun* the membrane at the end of the external auditory meatus leading from the outer ear, which vibrates with sound and passes the vibrations on to the ossicles in the middle ear. Also called **myringa**, **tympanum** (NOTE: For other terms referring to the eardrum, see words beginning with **tympan-**, **tympano-**.)

**early onset pre-eclampsia** /,ɜ:li ,ɒnset ,pri: r'klæmpsɪə/ *noun* pre-eclampsia which appears earlier than the 37th week of the pregnancy

**earwax** /'ɪəwæks/ *noun* same as **cerumen**

**Ebola virus** /ɪ'bəʊlə ,vaɪrəs/ *noun* a highly contagious virus found in West Africa. Patients who are affected with it vomit, have bloody diarrhoea and blood seeps through their skin.

**eburnation** /,ɪ:bə'neɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the conversion of cartilage into a hard mass with a shiny surface like bone

**ecbolic** /ek'bɒlɪk/ *noun* a substance which produces contraction of the uterus and so induces childbirth or abortion ■ *adjective* causing contraction of the uterus

**ecchymosis** /,ekɪ'məʊsɪs/ *noun* a dark area on the skin made by blood which has escaped into the tissues after a blow. Also called **bruise**, **contusion**

**eccrine** /'ekrɪn/ *adjective* referring to a gland, especially a sweat gland, which does not disintegrate and remains intact during secretion. Also called **merocrine**

**eccyesis** /,eksaɪ'ɪ:sɪs/ *noun* same as **ectopic pregnancy**

**ECG** *abbreviation* electrocardiogram

**echo-** /ekəʊ/ *prefix* referring to sound

**echocardiogram** /,ekəʊ'kɑ:diəgræm/ *noun* a record of heart movements made using ultrasound

**echocardiography** /,ekəʊkɑ:di'ɒgrəfi/ *noun* the use of ultrasound to examine the heart

**echoencephalography** /,ekəʊen,kɛfə'ɒgrəfi/ *noun* the use of ultrasound to examine the brain

**echography** /e'kɒgrəfi/ *noun* same as **ultrasonography**

**echovirus** /'ekəʊ,vɑɪrəs/ *noun* one of a group of viruses which can be isolated from the intestine and which can cause serious illnesses such as aseptic meningitis, gastroenteritis and respiratory infection in small children. Compare **reovirus**

**eclampsia** /ɪ'klæmpsɪə/ *noun* a serious condition of pregnant women at the end of pregnancy, caused by toxæmia, in which the woman has high blood pressure and may go into a coma. ◊ **pre-eclampsia**

**ecmnesia** /ek'ni:ziə/ *noun* a condition in which someone is not able to remember recent events, while remembering clearly events which happened some time ago

**E. coli** /,ɪ: 'kəʊlə/ *noun* same as **Escherichia coli**

**economy class syndrome** /ɪ'kɒnəmi klɑ:s ,sɪndrəʊm/ *noun* same as **deep-vein thrombosis** (*informal*)

**écraseur** /,eɪkrɑ:'zɜ:z/ *noun* a surgical instrument, usually with a wire loop, used to cut a part or a growth off at its base

**ECT** *abbreviation* electroconvulsive therapy

**ect-** /ekt/ *prefix* same as **ecto-** (*used before vowels*)

**ecto-** /ektəʊ/ *prefix* outside

**-ectomy** /ektəmi/ *suffix* referring to the removal of a part by surgical operation

**ectoparasite** /,ektəʊ'pærəsɑɪt/ *noun* a parasite which lives on the skin. Compare **endoparasite**

**ectopia** /ek'təʊpiə/ *noun* a condition in which an organ or part of the body is not in its usual position

**ectopic** /ek'tɒpɪk/ *adjective* not in the usual position. Opposite **entopic**

**ectopic heartbeat** /ek,tɒpɪk 'hɑ:tbɪ:t/ *noun* an unusual extra beat of the heart which originates from a point other than the sinoatrial node. Also called **extrasystole**, **premature beat**

**ectopic pacemaker** /ek,tɒpɪk 'peɪsmɪkə/ *noun* an unusual focus of the heart muscle which takes the place of the sinoatrial node

**ectopic pregnancy** /ek,tɒpɪk 'pregnənsi/ *noun* a pregnancy where the fetus develops outside the uterus, often in one of the Fallopian tubes. Also called **extrauterine pregnancy**, **ectocyesis**

**ectro-** /ektrəʊ/ *prefix* referring to a usually congenital absence or lack of something

**ectrodactyly** /,ektrəʊ'dæktɪli/ *noun* a congenital absence of all or part of a finger

**ectromelia** /,ektrəʊ'mi:liə/ *noun* a congenital absence of one or more limbs

**ectropion** /ek'trəʊpiən/ *noun* a turning of the edge of an eyelid outwards. † **eversion**

**eczema** /'eksmə/ *noun* a non-contagious inflammation of the skin, with an itchy rash and blisters

**eczematous** /ek'semətəs/ *adjective* referring to eczema

**eczematous dermatitis** /ek,semətəs,dɜ:mə'taɪtɪs/ *noun* an itchy inflammation or irritation of the skin due to an allergic reaction to a substance which a person has touched or absorbed

**EDD** *abbreviation* expected date of delivery

**edentulous** /'dentjʊləs/ *adjective* having lost all teeth

**EDTA** /,i: di: ti: 'eɪ/ *noun* a colourless chemical that can bind to heavy metals to remove them from the bloodstream. Full form **ethylene diamine tetra-acetate**

**Edwards' syndrome** /'edwədz ,sɪndrəʊm/ *noun* a severe genetic disorder that results in malformations of the brain, kidney, heart, hands and feet. It is caused by an extra copy of chromosome 18 and those people who have it usually die within six months.

**EEG** *abbreviation* electroencephalogram

**EFA** *abbreviation* essential fatty acid

**effacement** /'feɪsmənt/ *noun* the thinning of the cervix before it dilates in childbirth

**effective dose** /ɪ,fektɪv 'dəʊs/ *noun* a size of dose which will produce the effect required

**effector** /'fektə/ *noun* a nerve ending in muscles or glands which is activated to produce contraction or secretion

**effluent** /'eflənt/ *adjective* carrying something away from part of the body or from the centre. Opposite **afferent**

**effluent nerve** /'eflənt nɜ:v/ *noun* same as **motor nerve**

**effleurage** /,eflɜ:'rɑ:ʒ/ *noun* a form of massage where the skin is stroked in one direction to increase blood flow

**effort syndrome** /'efət ,sɪndrəʊm/ *noun* same as **disordered action of the heart**

**effusion** /ɪ'fju:z(ə)n/ *noun* a discharge of blood, fluid or pus into or out of an internal cavity

**egg** /eg/ *noun* a reproductive cell produced in the female body by an ovary, and which, if fertilised by the male sperm, becomes an embryo

**ego** /'i:gəʊ/ *noun* (*in psychology*) the part of the mind which is consciously in contact with the outside world and is influenced by experiences of the world

**EHO** *abbreviation* Environmental Health Officer

**EIA** *abbreviation* exercise-induced asthma

**Eisenmenger syndrome** /'aɪzənmenjə ,sɪndrəʊm/ *noun* heart disease caused by a septal defect between the ventricles, with pulmonary hypertension [Described 1897. After Victor Eisenmenger (1864–1932), German physician.]

**ejaculate** /ɪ'dʒækjʊleɪt/ *verb* to send out semen from the penis

**ejaculation** /ɪ,dʒækjʊ'leɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the sending out of semen from the penis

**ejaculatio praecox** /ɪdʒækjʊ,leɪʃɪə 'prɪ:kɒks/ *noun* a situation where a man ejaculates too early during sexual intercourse

**ejaculatory duct** /ɪ'dʒækjʊlətri dʌkt/ *noun* one of two ducts leading from the seminal vesicles through the prostate gland to the urethra. See illustration at **UROGENITAL SYSTEM (MALE)** in Supplement

**elastic cartilage** /ɪ,læstɪk 'kɑ:təlɪdʒ/ *noun* flexible cartilage, e.g. in the ear and epiglottis

**elastic fibre** /ɪ,læstɪk 'faɪbə/ *noun* fibre which can expand easily and is found in elastic cartilage, the skin and the walls of arteries and the lungs. Also called **yellow fibre**

**elastic tissue** /ɪ,læstɪk 'tɪʃu:/ *noun* connective tissue which contains elastic fibres, e.g. in the walls of arteries or of the alveoli in the lungs

**elastin** /ɪ'læstɪn/ *noun* a protein which occurs in elastic fibres

**elation** /ɪ'leɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the state of being happy, stimulated and excited

**elbow** /'elbəʊ/ *noun* a hinged joint where the upper arm bone (**humerus**) joins the forearm bones (**radius** and **ulna**)

**elbow crutch** /'elbəʊ krʌtʃ/ *noun* a crutch which surrounds the arms at the elbows and has a handle to hold lower down the shaft

**elective care** /ɪ,lektɪv 'keə/ *noun* hospital care which is planned in advance, rather than a response to an emergency

**elective surgery** /ɪ,lektɪv 'sɜ:dʒəri/, **elective treatment** /ɪ,lektɪv 'trɪtmənt/ *noun* surgery or

treatment which a patient can choose to have but is not urgently necessary to save his or her life

**electro-** /ɪˈlektɹəʊ/ *prefix* referring to electricity

**electrocardiogram** /ɪˌlektɹəʊˈkɑːdiəgræm/ *noun* a chart which records the electrical impulses in the heart muscle. Abbreviation **ECG**, **EKG**

**electrocardiograph** /ɪˌlektɹəʊˈkɑːdiəgrɑːf/ *noun* an apparatus for measuring and recording the electrical impulses of the muscles of the heart as it beats

**electrocardiography** /ɪˌlektɹəʊkɑːdɪˈnɒgrəfi/ *noun* the process of recording the electrical impulses of the heart

**electrocardiophonography** /ɪˌlektɹəʊkɑːdiəfəˈnɒgrəfi/ *noun* the process of electrically recording the sounds of the heartbeats

**electrocautery** /ɪˌlektɹəʊˈkɑːtəri/ *noun* same as **galvanocautery**

**electroconvulsive therapy** /ɪˌlektɹəʊkənˌvʌlsɪvˈθerəpi/ *noun* the treatment of severe depression and some mental disorders by giving someone who has been anaesthetised small electric shocks in the brain to make him or her have convulsions. Abbreviation **ECT**. Also called **electroplexy**

**electrode** /ɪˈlektɹəd/ *noun* the conductor of an electrical apparatus which touches the body and carries an electric shock

**electroencephalogram** /ɪˌlektɹəʊɪnˈsefələgræm/ *noun* a chart on which the electrical impulses in the brain are recorded. Abbreviation **EEG**

**electroencephalograph** /ɪˌlektɹəʊɪnˈsefələgrɑːf/ *noun* an apparatus which records the electrical impulses in the brain

**electroencephalography** /ɪˌlektɹəʊɪnsefəˈlɒgrəfi/ *noun* the process of recording the electrical impulses in the brain

**electrolysis** /ɪˌlekˈtrɒləsɪs/ *noun* the destruction of tissue such as unwanted hair by applying an electric current

**electrophoresis** /ɪˌlektɹəʊfəˈriːsɪs/ *noun* the analysis of a substance by the movement of charged particles towards an electrode in a solution

**electroplexy** /ɪˈlektɹəʊpleksi/ *noun* same as **electroconvulsive therapy**

**electroretinogram** /ɪˌlektɹəʊˈretɪnəgræm/ *noun* the printed result of electroretinography. Abbreviation **ERG**

**electroretinography** /ɪˌlektɹəʊretɪˈnɒgrəfi/ *noun* the process of recording electrical changes in the retina when stimulated by light

**electrosurgery** /ɪˌlektɹəʊˈsɜːdʒəri/ *noun* an operation in which the surgeon uses an electrical current to cut or cauterise tissue

**electrotherapy** /ɪˌlektɹəʊˈθerəpi/ *noun* the treatment of a disorder such as some forms of

paralysis by using low-frequency electric current to try to revive the muscles

**element** /ˈelɪmənt/ *noun* a basic simple chemical substance which cannot be broken down into simpler substances. † **trace element**

**elephantiasis** /ˌelɪfənˈtaɪəsɪs/ *noun* a condition in which parts of the body swell and the skin becomes hardened, frequently caused by infestation with various species of the parasitic worm *Filaria*

**elevate** /ˈelɪveɪt/ *verb* to raise something or to lift something up ○ *To control bleeding, apply pressure and elevate the part.*

**elevation sling** /ˌelɪˈveɪf(ə)n slɪŋ/ *noun* a sling tied round the neck, used to hold an injured hand or arm in a high position to control bleeding

**elevator** /ˈelɪveɪtə/ *noun* **1.** a muscle which raises part of the body **2.** a surgical instrument used to lift part of a broken bone

**elimination** /ɪˌlɪmɪˈneɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the removal of waste matter from the body

**elimination diet** /ɪˌlɪmɪˈneɪʃ(ə)n ˌdaɪət/ *noun* a structured diet where different foods are eliminated one at a time in order to see the effect on symptoms, used in conditions such as allergies and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder

**ELISA** /ˈlɪzə/ *noun* a process in which an enzyme binds to an antibody or antigen and causes a colour change that shows the presence or amount of protein in a sample of biological material. Full form **enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay**

**elixir** /ɪˈlɪksə/ *noun* a sweet liquid which hides the unpleasant taste of a drug

**elliptocytosis** /ɪˌlɪptəʊsaɪˈtəʊsɪs/ *noun* a condition in which unusual oval-shaped red cells appear in the blood

**emaciation** /ɪˌmeɪsɪˈeɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* **1.** the fact of being extremely thin and underweight **2.** the loss of body tissue

**emasculatation** /ɪˌmæskjuˈleɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the removal of the penis

**embalm** /ɪmˈbɑːm/ *verb* to preserve a dead body by using special antiseptic chemicals to prevent decay

**embolectomy** /ˌembəˈlektəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to remove a blood clot

**emboli** /ˈembəli/ plural of **embolus**

**embolisation** /ˌembəlaɪˈzeɪʃ(ə)n/, **embolization** *noun* the use of emboli inserted down a catheter into a blood vessel to treat internal bleeding

**embolism** /ˈembəlɪz(ə)m/ *noun* the blocking of an artery by a mass of material, usually a blood clot, preventing the flow of blood

**embolus** /ˈembələs/ *noun* **1.** a mass of material which blocks a blood vessel, e.g. a blood clot, air bubble or fat globule **2.** material inserted into a

blood vessel down a catheter to treat internal bleeding (NOTE: The plural is **emboli**.)

**embryo** /'embriəʊ/ *noun* an unborn baby during the first eight weeks after conception (NOTE: After eight weeks, the unborn baby is called a **fetus**.)

**embryological** /,embriə'lɒdʒɪk(ə)/ *adjective* referring to embryology

**embryology** /,embri'blɒdʒi/ *noun* the study of the early stages of the development of an embryo

**embryonic** /,embri'ɒnɪk/ *adjective* referring to an embryo

**embryonic membrane** /,embri'ɒnɪk 'membreɪn/ *noun* one of the two layers around an embryo providing protection and food supply, i.e. the **amnion** and the **chorion**

**emergency** /'ɪmɜːdʒənsi/ *noun* a situation where urgent immediate action has to be taken

**emesis** /'eməsɪs/ *noun* same as **vomiting**

**emetic** /'metɪk/ *noun* a substance which causes vomiting ■ *adjective* causing vomiting

**eminence** /'emɪnəns/ *noun* something which protrudes from a surface, e.g. a lump on a bone or swelling on the skin

**emissary vein** /'emɪsəri ,veɪn/ *noun* a vein through the skull which connects the venous sinuses with the scalp veins

**emission** /'ɪmɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a discharge or release of fluid

**emmetropia** /emɪ'trɒpiə/ *noun* the correct focusing of light rays by the eye onto the retina giving normal vision. Compare **ametropia**

**emollient** /'ɪmɒliənt/ *noun* a substance which soothes or smooths the skin, e.g. to prevent the development of eczema ■ *adjective* soothing

**emotion** /'ɪməʊʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a strong feeling

**empathy** /'empəθi/ *noun* the ability to understand the problems and feelings of another person

**emphysema** /,emfɪ'si:mə/ *noun* a condition in which the walls of the alveoli of the lungs break down, reducing the surface available for gas exchange and resulting in a lower oxygen level in the blood and shortness of breath. It can be caused by smoking, living in a polluted environment, old age, asthma or whooping cough.

**empirical treatment** /ɪm,pɪrɪk(ə)l 'tri:tmənt/ *noun* treatment which is based on symptoms and clinical experience rather than on a thorough knowledge of the cause of the disorder

**empowerment** /ɪm'pəʊəmənt/ *noun* the act of giving someone authority and power to make decisions that will affect them

**empyema** /,empai'i:mə/ *noun* the collection of pus in a cavity, especially in the pleural cavity. Also called **pyothorax**

**emulsion** /'ɪmʌljən/ *noun* a combination of liquids such as oil and water which do not usually mix

**EN** *abbreviation* enrolled nurse

**en-** /en, ɪn/ *prefix* **1.** in, into **2.** to provide with **3.** to cause to be **4.** to put into or cover with **5.** to go into

**enalapril** /e'næləprɪl/ *noun* a drug used for the short-term management of high blood pressure

**enamel** /'ɪnæm(ə)l/ *noun* the hard white shiny outer covering of the crown of a tooth

**enarthrosis** /,enɑː'thɔːsɪs/ *noun* a ball and socket joint, e.g. the hip joint

**encapsulated** /ɪn'kæpsjuleɪtɪd/ *adjective* enclosed in a capsule or in a sheath of tissue

**encefalin** /en'kefəlɪn/ *noun* another spelling of **encephalin**

**encephal-** /enkɪfæl/ *prefix* same as **encephalo-** (*used before vowels*)

**encephala** /en'kefələ/ plural of **encephalon**

**encephalin** /en'kefəlɪn/ *noun* a peptide produced in the brain which acts as a natural pain-killer. † **endorphin**

**encephalitis** /en,kefə'laitɪs, en,sefə'laitɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the brain

**encephalo-** /enkɪfələ/ *prefix* referring to the brain

**encephalocele** /en'kefələʊsi:l/ *noun* a condition in which the brain protrudes through a congenital or traumatic gap in the skull bones

**encephalogram** /en'kefələgræm/, **encephalograph** /en'kefələgrɑːf/ *noun* an X-ray photograph of the ventricles and spaces of the brain taken after air has been injected into the cerebrospinal fluid by lumbar puncture

**encephaloma** /en,kefə'ləʊmə/ *noun* a tumour of the brain

**encephalomyelitis** /en,kefələʊmaɪə'laitɪs/ *noun* a group of diseases which cause inflammation of the brain and the spinal cord

**encephalomyelopathy** /en,kefələʊmaɪə'lɒpəθi/ *noun* any condition where the brain and spinal cord are diseased

**encephalon** /en'kefəlɒn/ *noun* same as **brain** (NOTE: The plural is **encephala**.)

**encephalopathy** /en,kefə'lɒpəθi/ *noun* any disease of the brain

**enchondroma** /,enkən'drəʊmə/ *noun* a tumour formed of cartilage growing inside a bone

**encopresis** /,enkəʊ'priːsɪs/ *noun* faecal incontinence not associated with a physical condition or disease

**encysted** /en'sɪstɪd/ *adjective* enclosed in a capsule like a cyst

**end-** /end/ *prefix* same as **endo-** (*used before vowels*)

**endarterectomy** /,endɑːtə'rektəmi/ *noun* the surgical removal of the lining of a blocked artery. Also called **rebore**

**endarteritis** /,endɑːtə'raɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the inner lining of an artery

**endarteritis obliterans** /,endɑ:t,rɑɪtɪs ə 'blɪtərənz/ *noun* a condition where inflammation in an artery is so severe that it blocks the artery

**endastral** /end'ɑ:rəl/ *adjective* inside the ear

**endemic** /en'demɪk/ *adjective* referring to any disease which is very common in specific places  
○ *This disease is endemic to Mediterranean countries.*

**endo-** /endəʊ/ *prefix* inside

**endobronchial** /,endəʊ'brɒŋkiəl/ *adjective* inside the bronchi

**endocardial** /,endəʊ'kɑ:diəl/ *adjective* referring to the endocardium

**endocardial pacemaker** /,endəʊkɑ:diəl 'peɪsməɪkəl/ *noun* a pacemaker attached to the lining of the heart

**endocarditis** /,endəʊkɑ:'daɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the membrane lining of the heart

**endocardium** /,endəʊ'kɑ:diəm/ *noun* a membrane which lines the heart. See illustration at **HEART** in Supplement

**endocervicitis** /,endəʊsɜ:vɪ'saɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the membrane in the neck of the uterus

**endocervix** /,endəʊ'sɜ:vɪks/ *noun* a membrane which lines the neck of the uterus

**endochondral** /,endəʊ'kɒndrəl/ *adjective* inside a cartilage

**endocrine** /'endəʊkraɪn/ *adjective* relating to the endocrine glands or the hormones they secrete

**endocrine gland** /'endəʊkraɪn glænd/ *noun* a gland without a duct which produces hormones which are introduced directly into the bloodstream, e.g. the pituitary gland, thyroid gland, the adrenal gland and the gonads. Also called **ductless gland**. Compare **exocrine gland**

**endocrine system** /'endəʊkraɪn ,sɪstəm/ *noun* a system of related ductless glands

**endocrinologist** /,endəʊkɪrɪ'nɒlədʒɪst/ *noun* a doctor who specialises in the study of endocrinology

**endocrinology** /,endəʊkɪrɪ'nɒlədʒɪ/ *noun* the study of the endocrine system, its function and effects

**endoderm** /'endəʊdɜ:m/ *noun* the inner of three layers surrounding an embryo. Also called **entoderm**

**endodermal** /,endəʊ'dɜ:m(ə)/ *adjective* referring to the endoderm. Also called **entodermal**

**endogenous** /en'dɒdʒənəs/ *adjective* developing or being caused by something inside an organism. Compare **exogenous**

**endogenous depression** /en'dɒdʒənəs dɪ 'preʃ(ə)n/ *noun* depression caused by no obvious external factor

**endogenous eczema** /en'dɒdʒənəs 'eksɪmə/ *noun* eczema which is caused by no obvious external factor

**endolymph** /'endəʊlɪmf/ *noun* a fluid inside the membranous labyrinth in the inner ear

**endometrial** /,endəʊ'mi:triəl/ *adjective* referring to the endometrium

**endometrial laser ablation** /,endəʊmi:triəl 'leɪzə əb,leɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a gynaecological surgical procedure using a laser to treat fibroids or other causes of thickening of the lining of the uterus

**endometriosis** /,endəʊmi:tri'əʊsɪs/ *noun* a condition affecting women, in which tissue similar to the tissue of the uterus is found in other parts of the body

**endometritis** /,endəʊmɪ'traɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the lining of the uterus

**endometrium** /,endəʊ'mi:triəm/ *noun* the mucous membrane lining the uterus, part of which is shed at each menstruation (NOTE: The plural is **endometria**.)

**endomyocarditis** /,endəʊmaɪəʊkɑ:'daɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the muscle and inner membrane of the heart

**endomysium** /,endəʊ'mɪsɪəm/ *noun* connective tissue around and between muscle fibres

**endoneurium** /,endəʊ'njʊəriəm/ *noun* fibrous tissue between the individual fibres in a nerve

**endoparasite** /,endəʊ'pærəsəɪt/ *noun* a parasite which lives inside its host, e.g. in the intestines. Compare **ectoparasite**

**endophthalmitis** /,endɒfθæl'maɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the interior of the eyeball

**endorphin** /en'dɔ:fɪn/ *noun* a peptide produced by the brain which acts as a natural painkiller. ◊ **encephalin**

**endoscope** /'endəskəʊp/ *noun* an instrument used to examine the inside of the body, made of a thin tube which is passed into the body down a passage. The tube has a fibre optic light, and may have small surgical instruments attached.

**endoscopic retrograde cholangiopancreatography** /,endəʊskɒpɪk ,retʁəgrəɪd kə 'lændʒɪəpæŋkriə'tɒgrəfi/ *noun* a method used to examine the pancreatic duct and bile duct for possible obstructions. Abbreviation **ERCP**

**endoscopy** /en'dɒskəpi/ *noun* an examination of the inside of the body using an endoscope

**endoskeleton** /'endəʊ,skelɪt(ə)n/ *noun* the inner structure of bones and cartilage in an animal

**endosteum** /en'dɒstiəm/ *noun* a membrane lining the bone marrow cavity inside a long bone

**endothelial** /,endəʊ'θi:liəl/ *adjective* referring to the endothelium



**endothelioma** /,ɛndəʊθi:lɪ'əʊmə/ *noun* a malignant tumour originating inside the endothelium

**endothelium** /,ɛndəʊθi:lɪəm/ *noun* a membrane of special cells which lines the heart, the lymph vessels, the blood vessels and various body cavities. Compare **epithelium**, **mesothelium**

**endotoxin** /,ɛndəʊ'tɒksɪn/ *noun* a toxic substance released after the death of some bacterial cells

**endotracheal** /,ɛndəʊ'treɪkiəl/ *adjective* same as **intratracheal**

**endotracheal tube** /,ɛndəʊ'treɪkiəl,tju:b/ *noun* a tube passed down the trachea, through either the nose or mouth, in anaesthesia or to help a person breathe

**end plate** /'ɛnd pleɪt/ *noun* the end of a motor nerve, where it joins muscle fibre

**end stage renal disease** /,ɛnd steɪdʒ 'ri:n(ə)l dɪ'zi:z/ *noun* the stage of kidney disease at which uraemia occurs and dialysis needs to start. Abbreviation **ESRD**

**enema** /'ɛnɪmə/ *noun* a liquid substance put into the rectum to introduce a drug into the body, to wash out the colon before an operation or for diagnosis

**energy** /'ɛnədʒi/ *noun* the force or strength to carry out activities ○ *You need to eat certain types of food to give you energy.*

**enervation** /,ɛnə'veɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* 1. general nervous weakness 2. a surgical operation to remove a nerve

**engagement** /'ɪn'ɡeɪdʒmənt/ *noun* (*in obstetrics*) the moment where part of the fetus, usually the head, enters the pelvis at the beginning of labour

**engorged** /'ɪn'ɡɔ:dʒd/ *adjective* excessively filled with liquid, usually blood

**engorgement** /'ɪn'ɡɔ:dʒmənt/ *noun* the excessive filling of a vessel, usually with blood

**encephalin** /ɛn'kefəlɪn/ *noun* *US* another spelling of **encephalin**

**enophthalmos** /,ɛnɒf'θɛlməs/ *noun* a condition in which the eyes are very deep in their sockets

**Enrolled Nurse** /'ɪn,rəʊld 'nɜ:z/ *noun* † **second-level nurse**

**ensiform cartilage** /,ɛnsɪfɔ:ɪm 'kɑ:tɪlɪdʒ/ *noun* same as **xiphoid process**

**ENT** *abbreviation* Ear, Nose & Throat

**ENT department** /,i: ɛn 'ti: dɪ,pɑ:tmənt/ *noun* a department of otorhinolaryngology

**enter-** /ɛntə/ *prefix* same as **entero-** (*used before vowels*)

**enteral** /'ɛntərəl/ *adjective* referring to the intestine. Compare **parenteral**

**enteral feeding** /,ɛntərəl 'fi:dɪŋ/ *noun* the feeding of a person by a nasogastric tube or by the

infusion of liquid food directly into the intestine. Also called **enteral nutrition**

**enteralgia** /,ɛntərə'ældʒə/ *noun* same as **colic**

**enterally** /'ɛntərəli/ *adverb* referring to a method of feeding a person by nasogastric tube or directly into the intestine

**enteral nutrition** /,ɛntərəl nju:'trɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* same as **enteral feeding**

**enteric** /ɛn'terɪk/ *adjective* referring to the intestine

**enteric-coated** /ɛn'terɪk 'kəʊtɪd/ *adjective* referring to a capsule with a coating which prevents it from being digested and releasing the drug until it reaches the intestine

**enteritis** /,ɛntə'reɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the mucous membrane of the intestine

**entero-** /ɛntərəʊ/ *prefix* referring to the intestine

**Enterobacteria** /,ɛntərəʊbæk'tɪəriə/ *noun* a family of Gram-negative bacteria, including *Salmonella*, *Shigella*, *Escherichia* and *Klebsiella*

**enterobiasis** /,ɛntərəʊ'baɪəʊsɪs/ *noun* a common children's disease, caused by threadworms in the large intestine which cause itching round the anus. Also called **oxyuriasis**

**Enterobius** /,ɛntərəʊbiəs/ *noun* a small thin nematode worm, one species of which, *Enterobius vermicularis*, infests the large intestine and causes itching round the anus. Also called **threadworm**, **pinworm**

**enterocele** /'ɛntərəʊsi:l/, **enterocoele** /'ɛntərəʊsi:l/ *noun* a hernia of the intestine

**enterocolitis** /,ɛntərəʊkə'laitɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the colon and small intestine

**enterolith** /'ɛntərəʊlɪθ/ *noun* a stone in the intestine

**enteron** /'ɛntərəʊn/ *noun* the whole intestinal tract

**enteropathy** /,ɛntərə'ɒpəθi/ *noun* any disorder of the intestine. † **gluten-induced enteropathy**

**enteroscope** /'ɛntərəʊskəʊp/ *noun* an instrument for inspecting the inside of the intestine

**enterostomy** /,ɛntərə'rɒstəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to make an opening between the small intestine and the abdominal wall

**enterotomy** /,ɛntərə'rɒtəmi/ *noun* a surgical incision in the intestine

**enterotoxin** /,ɛntərəʊ'tɒksɪn/ *noun* a bacterial exotoxin which particularly affects the intestine

**enterovirus** /,ɛntərəʊ'vaɪrəs/ *noun* a virus which prefers to live in the intestine. Enteroviruses include poliomyelitis virus, Coxsackie viruses and the echoviruses.

**entoderm** /'ɛntəʊdɜ:ɪm/ *noun* same as **entoderm**

**entodermal** /,ɛntəʊ'dɜ:ɪm(ə)/ *adjective* same as **endodermal**

**Entonox** /'entənɒks/ *noun* a gas consisting of 50% oxygen and 50% nitrous oxide that is used as a painkiller during childbirth

**entopic** /ɪn'tɒpɪk/ *adjective* located or taking place in the usual position. Opposite **ectopic**

**entropion** /ɪn'trɒpɪən/ *noun* a turning of the edge of the eyelid towards the inside

**enucleation** /ɪ,nju:kli'eɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the surgical removal of all of a tumour

**enuresis** /ɪ,ɛnjʊ'reɪsɪs/ *noun* the involuntary passing of urine

**enuretic** /ɪ,ɛnjʊ'retɪk/ *adjective* referring to enuresis, or causing enuresis

**environment** /ɪn'vaɪrənmənt/ *noun* the conditions and influences under which an organism lives

**environmental** /ɪn,vaɪrən'ment(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to the environment

**Environmental Health Officer** /ɪn,vaɪrənment(ə)'helθ,ɒfɪs/ *noun* an official of a local authority who examines the environment and tests for air pollution, bad sanitation, noise pollution and similar threats to public health. Abbreviation **EHO**

**enzyme** /'enzaim/ *noun* a protein substance produced by living cells which aids a biochemical reaction in the body (NOTE: The names of enzymes mostly end with the suffix **-ase**.)

**enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay** /ɪ,enzaim lɪŋkt,ɪmju'nəʊ,sɔ:ɒnt 'æseɪ/ *noun* full form of **ELISA**

**eonism** /i:əni:z(ə)m/ *noun* cross-dressing, when a male wears female dress

**eosin** /i:əʊsɪn/ *noun* a red crystalline solid used as a biological staining dye

**eosinopenia** /i:əʊsɪnə'pi:niə/ *noun* a reduction in the number of eosinophils in the blood

**eosinophil** /i:əʊ'sɪnəfɪl/ *noun* a type of cell that can be stained with eosin

**eosinophilia** /i:əʊsɪnə'fɪliə/ *noun* an excess of eosinophils in the blood

**ependyma** /ɪ'pendɪmə/ *noun* a thin membrane which lines the ventricles of the brain and the central canal of the spinal cord

**ependymal** /ɪ'pendɪm(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to the ependyma

**ependymal cell** /ɪ'pendɪm(ə)l sel/ *noun* one of the cells which form the ependyma

**ependymoma** /ɪ,pendɪ'məʊmə/ *noun* a tumour in the brain originating in the ependyma

**ephedrine** /'efɪdri:n/ *noun* a drug that relieves asthma and blocked noses by causing the air passages to widen

**ephidrosis** /ɪ,efɪ'drəʊsɪs/ *noun* an unusual amount of sweat

**epi-** /epɪ/ *prefix* on or over

**epiblepharon** /,ɛpɪ'blefəron/ *noun* an unusual fold of skin over the eyelid, which may press the eyelashes against the eyeball

**epicanthus** /,ɛpɪ'kænθəs/, **epicanthic fold** /,ɛpɪ'kænθɪk 'fəʊld/ *noun* a large fold of skin in the inner corner of the eye, common in babies and also found in adults of some groups such as the Chinese

**epicardial** /,ɛpɪ'kɑ:diəl/ *adjective* referring to the epicardium

**epicardial pacemaker** /,ɛpɪ'kɑ:diəl 'peɪsmɪkə/ *noun* a pacemaker attached to the surface of the ventricle

**epicardium** /,ɛpɪ'kɑ:diəm/ *noun* the inner layer of the pericardium which lines the walls of the heart, outside the myocardium. See illustration at **HEART** in Supplement

**epicondyle** /,ɛpɪ'kɒndɪl/ *noun* a projecting part of the round end of a bone above the condyle

**epicondylitis** /,ɛpɪ'kɒndɪ'laitɪs/ *noun* same as **tennis elbow**

**epicranium** /,ɛpɪ'kreɪniəm/ *noun* the five layers of the scalp, the skin and hair on the head covering the skull

**epicritic** /,ɛpɪ'krɪtɪk/ *adjective* referring to the nerves which govern the fine senses of touch and temperature

**epidemic** /,ɛpɪ'demɪk/ *adjective* spreading quickly through a large part of the population ○ *The disease rapidly reached epidemic proportions.* ■ *noun* an outbreak of an infectious disease which spreads very quickly and affects a large number of people

**epidemiologist** /,ɛpɪ,dɪ:mɪ'blɒdʒɪst/ *noun* a person who specialises in the study of diseases in groups of people

**epidemiology** /,ɛpɪ,dɪ:mɪ'blɒdʒɪ/ *noun* the study of diseases in the community, in particular how they spread and how they can be controlled

**epidermal** /,ɛpɪ'dɜ:m(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to the epidermis

**epidermis** /,ɛpɪ'dɜ:mɪs/ *noun* the outer layer of the skin, including the dead skin on the surface. Also called **cuticle**

**epidermoid cyst** /,ɛpɪ'dɜ:mɔɪd 'sɪst/ *noun* same as **sebaceous cyst**

**epidermolysis** /,ɛpɪ'dɜ:mɒləsɪs/ *noun* separation of the epidermis from the tissue underneath, usually forming a blister

**epidermolysis bullosa** /,ɛpɪ'dɜ:mɒləsɪs bu'ləʊsə/ *noun* a group of disorders where blisters form on the skin

**Epidermophyton** /,ɛpɪ'dɜ:mɒfɪtən/ *noun* a fungus which grows on the skin and causes athlete's foot, among other disorders

**epidymal** /,ɛpɪ'dɪdɪm(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to the epididymis

**epididymectomy** /,epɪdɪdɪ'mektəmi/ *noun* the removal of the epididymis

**epididymis** /,epɪ'dɪdɪmɪs/ *noun* a long twisting thin tube at the back of the testis, which forms part of the efferent duct of the testis, and in which spermatozoa are stored before ejaculation. See illustration at **UROGENITAL SYSTEM (MALE)** in Supplement

**epididymitis** /,epɪdɪdɪ'maɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the epididymis

**epididymo-orchitis** /epɪ,dɪdɪməʊ ɔ:'kɑɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the epididymis and the testes

**epidural** /,epɪ'dʒʊərəl/ *adjective* on the outside of the dura mater. Also called **extradural** ■ *noun* same as **epidural anaesthesia**

**epidural anaesthesia** /epɪ,dʒʊərəl ,ænəs 'θi:ziəl/ *noun* a local anaesthesia in which anaesthetic is injected into the space between the vertebral canal and the dura mater

**epidural block** /,epɪdʒʊərəl 'blɒk/ *noun* analgesia produced by injecting an analgesic solution into the space between the vertebral canal and the dura mater

**epidural space** /,epɪdʒʊərəl 'speɪs/ *noun* a space in the spinal cord between the vertebral canal and the dura mater

**epigastric** /,epɪ'gæstrɪk/ *adjective* referring to the upper abdomen ○ *The patient complained of pains in the epigastric area.*

**epigastrium** /,epɪ'gæstriəm/ *noun* the part of the upper abdomen between the ribcage and the navel. Also called **the pit of the stomach**

**epiglottis** /,epɪ'glɒtɪs/ *noun* a flap of cartilage at the root of the tongue which moves to block the windpipe when food is swallowed, so that the food does not go down the trachea

**epiglottitis** /,epɪglɒ'taɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation and swelling of the epiglottis

**epilation** /,epɪ'leɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the process of removing hair by destroying the hair follicles

**epilepsy** /'epɪlepsi/ *noun* a disorder of the nervous system in which there are convulsions and loss of consciousness due to a disordered discharge of cerebral neurones

**epileptic** /,epɪ'leptɪk/ *adjective* having epilepsy, or relating to epilepsy ■ *noun* a person with epilepsy (NOTE: The word 'epileptic' to describe a person is now avoided.)

**epileptic fit** /,epɪleptɪk 'fɪt/ *noun* an attack of convulsions, and sometimes unconsciousness, due to epilepsy

**epileptiform** /,epɪ'leptɪfɔ:m/ *adjective* being similar to epilepsy

**epiloia** /,epɪ'lɔɪə/ *noun* a hereditary disease of the brain associated with learning disabilities, epilepsy and tumours on the kidney and heart. Also called **tuberose sclerosis**

**epimenorrhagia** /,epɪmenə'reɪdʒə/ *noun* very heavy bleeding during menstruation occurring at very short intervals

**epimenorrhoea** /,epɪmenə'ri:ə/ *noun* menstruation at shorter intervals than twenty-eight days

**epiphora** /e'pɪfərə/ *noun* a condition in which the eye fills with tears either because the lacrimal duct is blocked or because excessive tears are being secreted

**epiphyseal** /,epɪ'fɪziəl/ *adjective* referring to an epiphysis

**epiphysis** /e'pɪfəʊsɪs/ *noun* the area of growth in a bone which is separated from the main part of the bone by cartilage until bone growth stops. See illustration at **BONE STRUCTURE** in Supplement. Compare **diaphysis, metaphysis**

**epiplo-** /epɪpləʊ/ *prefix* referring to the omentum

**epiploon** /e'pɪpləʊn/ *noun* same as **omentum**

**episclera** /'epɪsklɪərə/ *noun* the outer surface of the sclera of the eyeball

**episcleritis** /,epɪsklɪ'reɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the outer surface of the sclera in the eyeball

**episi-** /əpɪzi/, **episio-** /əpɪziəʊ/ *prefix* referring to the vulva

**episiorrhaphy** /ə,pɪzi'ɔ:rəfi/ *noun* a procedure for stitching torn labia majora

**episiotomy** /ə,pɪzi'ɒtəmi/ *noun* a surgical cut of the perineum near the vagina to prevent tearing during childbirth

**episodic** /,epɪ'sɒdɪk/ *adjective* happening in separate but related incidents, e.g. asthma which occurs in separate attacks

**epispadias** /,epɪ'speɪdiəs/ *noun* a congenital condition where the urethra opens on the top of the penis and not at the end. Compare **hypospadias**

**epistaxis** /,epɪ'stæksɪs/ *noun* same as **nosebleed**

**epithelial** /,epɪ'θi:liəl/ *adjective* referring to the epithelium

**epithelialisation** /,epɪ,θi:liələɪ'zeɪʃ(ə)n/, **epithelialization** *noun* the growth of skin over a wound

**epithelioma** /epθi:li'əʊmə/ *noun* a tumour arising from epithelial cells

**epithelium** /,epɪ'θi:liəm/ *noun* the layer or layers of cells covering an organ, including the skin and the lining of all hollow cavities except blood vessels, lymphatics and serous cavities. Compare **endothelium, mesothelium**

**Epstein-Barr virus** /,epstəɪn 'bɑ: ,vʌrəs/ *noun* a virus which probably causes glandular fever. Also called **EB virus** [Isolated and described 1964. After Michael Anthony Epstein (b. 1921), Bristol pathologist; Murray Llewellyn

Barr (1908–95), Canadian anatomist and cytologist, head of the Department of Anatomy at the University of Western Ontario, Canada.]

**epulis** /ɪ'pjʊ:lɪs/ *noun* a small fibrous swelling on a gum

**equi-** /ɪ:kwi, ekwi/ *prefix* equal

**equilibrium** /i:kwi'li:briəm/ *noun* a state of balance

**ER** *abbreviation* 1. US emergency room 2. endoplasmic reticulum

**Erb's palsy** /ɜ:ɪbz 'pɔ:lzi/, **Erb's paralysis** /ɜ:ɪbz pə'rælə'sɪs/ *noun* a condition in which an arm is paralysed because of birth injuries to the brachial plexus. ♪ **Bell's palsy**

**ERCP** *abbreviation* endoscopic retrograde cholangiopancreatography

**erectile** /ɪ'rektaɪl/ *adjective* able to become erect

**erectile dysfunction** /ɪ'rektaɪl dɪs'fʌŋkʃən/ *noun* a condition in which a man finds it difficult or impossible to have or maintain an erection during intercourse

**erection** /ɪ'rekʃən/ *noun* a state where a body part such as the penis becomes swollen because of engorgement with blood

**erector** /ɪ'rektə/ *noun* a small muscle which raises a body part

**erector spinae** /ɪ'rektə 'spaini:/ *noun* a large muscle starting at the base of the spine, and dividing as it runs up the spine

**ERG** *abbreviation* electroretinogram

**ergonomics** /ɜ:ɪgə'nɒmɪks/ *noun* the study of humans at work

**ergot** /'ɜ:ɪgət/ *noun* a disease of rye caused by the fungus *Claviceps purpurea*

**ergotamine** /ɜ:ɪgətəmi:n/ *noun* a drug that causes narrowing of blood vessels and alleviates migraine, derived from the ergot fungus

**ergotism** /'ɜ:ɪgətɪz(ə)m/ *noun* poisoning caused by eating rye which has been contaminated with the ergot fungus

**erogenous** /ɪ'rɒdʒənəs/ *adjective* producing sexual excitement

**erogenous zone** /ɪ'rɒdʒənəs zəʊn/ *noun* a part of the body which, if stimulated, produces sexual arousal, e.g. the penis, clitoris or nipples

**erotic** /ɪ'rɒtɪk/ *adjective* relating to or arousing the feeling of sexual desire

**ERPC** *abbreviation* evacuation of retained products of conception

**eructation** /i:ɪrʌk'teɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* same as belching

**eruption** /ɪ'rʌpʃən/ *noun* something which breaks through the skin, e.g. a rash or pimple

**ery-** /erɪ/ *prefix* same as **erythro-**

**erythema** /,erɪ'ti:mə/ *noun* redness on the skin, caused by hyperaemia of the blood vessels near the surface

**erythema ab igne** /,erɪ'ti:mə æb 'ɪgneɪ/ *noun* a pattern of red lines on the skin caused by exposure to heat

**erythema induratum** /,erɪ'ti:mə ɪndʒʊ 'reɪtəm/ *noun* a tubercular disease where ulcerating nodules appear on the legs of young women. Also called **Bazin's disease**

**erythema multiforme** /,erɪ'ti:mə 'mʌltɪfɔ:mɪ/ *noun* the sudden appearance of inflammatory red patches and sometimes blisters on the skin

**erythema nodosum** /,erɪ'ti:mə nəʊ'dəʊsəm/ *noun* an inflammatory disease where red swellings appear on the front of the legs

**erythema pernio** /,erɪ'ti:mə 'pɜ:niəʊ/ *noun* same as chilblain

**erythematous** /,erɪ'ti:mətəs/ *adjective* referring to erythema

**erythr-** /erɪθr/ *prefix* same as **erythro-** (used before vowels)

**erythrasma** /,erɪ'θræzmə/ *noun* a persistent bacterial skin infection occurring in a fold in the skin or where two skin surfaces touch, such as between the toes. It is caused by *Corynebacterium*.

**erythro-** /ɪrɪθrəʊ/ *prefix* red

**erythroblast** /ɪ'rɪθrəblæst/ *noun* a cell which forms an erythrocyte or red blood cell

**erythroblastosis** /ɪ,rɪθrəʊblæ'stəʊsɪs/ *noun* the presence of erythroblasts in the blood, usually found in haemolytic anaemia

**erythroblastosis fetalis** /ɪ,rɪθrəʊblæ'stəʊsɪs fi:tɑ:lɪs/ *noun* a blood disease affecting newborn babies, caused by a reaction between the rhesus factor of the mother and the fetus

**erythrocyte** /ɪ'rɪθrəsait/ *noun* a mature red blood cell

**erythrocyte sedimentation rate** /ɪ ,rɪθrəsait sedɪmen'teɪʃ(ə)n reɪt/ *noun* a test that measures how fast erythrocytes settle in a sample of blood plasma, used to confirm whether various blood conditions are present. Abbreviation **ESR**

**erythrocytosis** /ɪ,rɪθrəsai'təʊsɪs/ *noun* an increase in the number of red blood cells in the blood

**erythroderma** /ɪ,rɪθrə'dɜ:mə/ *noun* a condition in which the skin becomes red and flakes off

**erythroedema** /ɪ,rɪθrəʊ'di:mə/ *noun* same as acrodynia

**erythrogenesis** /ɪ,rɪθrə'dʒenəsɪs/, **erythropoiesis** /ɪ,rɪθrəpəʊɪ'sɪs/ *noun* the formation of red blood cells in red bone marrow

**erythropenia** /ɪ,rɪθrə'pi:nɪə/ *noun* a condition in which a person has a low number of erythrocytes in their blood

**erythroplasia** /ɪ,rɪθrə'pleɪziə/ *noun* the formation of lesions on the mucous membrane

**erythropoiesis** /ɪ,rɪθrə'pɔɪ'siːs/ *noun* same as **erythrogenesis**

**erythropoietin** /ɪ,rɪθrə'pɔɪətɪn/ *noun* a hormone which regulates the production of red blood cells

**erythroptasia** /ɪ,erɪ'θrɒpsɪə/ *noun* a condition in which someone sees things as if coloured red

**eschar** /'eskɑː/ *noun* a dry scab, e.g. one forming on a burn

**Escherichia** /ɛʃ'ɛrɪkiə/ *noun* a bacterium commonly found in faeces

**Escherichia coli** /ɛʃ'ɛrɪkiə 'kəʊlaɪ/ *noun* a Gram-negative bacterium associated with acute gastroenteritis. Also called **E. coli**

**Esmarch's bandage** /'esmɑːks 'bændɪdʒ/ *noun* a rubber band wrapped round a limb as a tourniquet before a surgical operation and left in place during the operation so as to keep the site free of blood [Described 1869. After Johann Friedrich August von Esmarch (1823–1908), Professor of Surgery at Kiel, Germany.]

**esotropia** /esə'trɒpiə/ *noun* a type of squint, where the eyes both look towards the nose. Also called **convergent strabismus**

**ESR** *abbreviation* erythrocyte sedimentation rate

**ESRD** *abbreviation* end-stage renal disease

**essence** /'es(ə)ns/ *noun* a concentrated oil from a plant, used in cosmetics, and sometimes as analgesics or antiseptics

**essential amino acid** /ɪ,senʃəl ə,mɪ:nəʊ 'æsɪd/ *noun* an amino acid which is necessary for growth but which cannot be synthesised in the body and has to be obtained from the food supply

COMMENT: The essential amino acids are: isoleucine, leucine, lysine, methionine, phenylalanine, threonine, tryptophan and valine.

**essential element** /ɪ,senʃəl 'elɪmənt/ *noun* a chemical element which is necessary to the body's growth or function, e.g. carbon, oxygen, hydrogen and nitrogen

**essential fatty acid** /ɪ,senʃəl 'fæti 'æsɪd/ *noun* an unsaturated fatty acid which is necessary for growth and health. *Abbreviation* **EFA**

COMMENT: The essential fatty acids are linoleic acid, linolenic acid and arachidonic acid.

**essential hypertension** /ɪ,senʃəl 'haɪpə 'tenʃən/ *noun* high blood pressure without any obvious cause

**essential oil** /ɪ,senʃəl 'ɔɪl/ *noun* a medicinal or fragrant oil distilled from some part of a plant

**essential tremor** /ɪ,senʃəl 'tremə/ *noun* an involuntary slow trembling movement of the hands often seen in elderly people

**essential uterine haemorrhage** /ɪ,senʃəl 'juːtəraɪn 'hem(ə)rɪdʒ/ *noun* heavy uterine bleeding for which there is no obvious cause

**ethambutol** /ɪ'θæmbjʊtəl/ *noun* a drug that is part of the treatment for bacterial infections such as tuberculosis

**ethanol** /'eθənl/ *noun* a colourless liquid, present in alcoholic drinks such as whisky, gin and vodka, and also used in medicines and as a disinfectant. Also called **ethyl alcohol**

**ethene** /'iːθiːn/ *noun* same as **ethylene**

**ether** /'iːθə/ *noun* an anaesthetic substance, now rarely used

**ethical** /'eθɪk(ə)/ *adjective* concerning ethics

**ethical committee** /'eθɪk(ə)l kə,mɪti/ *noun* a group of specialists who monitor experiments involving human beings or who regulate the way in which members of the medical profession conduct themselves

**ethics** /'eθɪks/ *noun* ▶ **medical ethics**

**ethinyloestradiol** /,eθɪn(ə)l,ɪːstrə'daɪəl/ *noun* an artificial hormone related to oestrogen that is effective in small doses. It forms part of hormone replacement therapy.

**ethmoid** /eθ'mɔɪd/, **ethmoidal** /eθ'mɔɪd(ə)/ *adjective* referring to the ethmoid bone or near to the ethmoid bone

**ethmoidal sinuses** /eθ,mɔɪd(ə)l 'saɪnəsɪz/ *plural noun* air cells inside the ethmoid bone

**ethmoid bone** /'eθmɔɪd bəʊn/ *noun* a bone which forms the top of the nasal cavity and part of the orbits

**ethmoidectomy** /,eθmɔɪ'dektəmi/ *noun* an operation to remove the lining between the sinuses

**ethmoiditis** /,eθmɔɪ'daɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the ethmoid bone or of the ethmoidal sinuses

**ethnic** /'eθnɪk/ *adjective* relating to a culturally or racially distinctive group of people

**ethyl alcohol** /,iθaɪl 'ælkəhɒl/ *noun* same as **ethanol**

**ethylene** /'eθəliːn/ *noun* a gas used as an anaesthetic

**ethylestrenol** /,eθ(ə)l'estrənəl/ *noun* an anabolic steroid

**etiology** /,ɪːti'ɒlədʒi/ *noun* *US* same as **aetiology**

**eucalyptus** /,juːkə'laɪptəs/ *noun* a genus of tree growing mainly in Australia, from which a strongly smelling oil is distilled

**eucalyptus oil** /,juːkə'laɪptəs ɔɪl/ *noun* an aromatic medicinal oil distilled from the leaves of various species of tree in the genus *Eucalyptus*

**eugenics** /juː'dʒenɪks/ *noun* the study of how to improve the human race by genetic selection

**eunuch** /'juːnək/ *noun* a castrated male

**euphoria** /ju:'fɔ:riəl/ *noun* a feeling of extreme happiness

**Eustachian canal** /ju:'steɪf(ə)n kə,næl/ *noun* a passage through the porous bone forming the outside part of the Eustachian tube

**Eustachian tube** /ju:'steɪf(ə)n tju:b/ *noun* the tube which connects the pharynx to the middle ear. See illustration at **EAR** in Supplement [Described 1562, but actually named after Eustachio by Valsalva a century later. Bartolomeo Eustachio (1520–74), physician to the Pope and Professor of Anatomy in Rome.]

**euthanasia** /,ju:'θə'neɪziəl/ *noun* the painless killing of an incurably ill person or someone in a permanent coma in order to end their distress. Also called **mercy killing** (NOTE: This practice is illegal in most countries.)

**euthyroid** /ju:'θaɪrɔɪd/ *noun* a condition where the thyroid is functioning normally

**evacuant** /ɪ'vækjuənt/ *noun* a medicine which makes a person have a bowel movement

**evacuation** /ɪ,vækju'eɪf(ə)n/ *noun* the act of removing the contents of something, especially discharging faeces from the bowel

**evacuation of retained products of conception** /ɪvækju,eɪf(ə)n əv rɪ,tetnd ,prɒdækt əv kən'sepʃən/ *noun* a D & C operation performed after an abortion or miscarriage to ensure the uterus is left empty. Abbreviation **ERPC**

**evaluation** /ɪ,vælju'eɪf(ə)n/ *noun* the act of examining and calculating the quantity or level of something ○ *In further evaluation of these patients no side-effects of the treatment were noted.*

**eventration** /ɪ,vɛn'treɪf(ə)n/ *noun* the pushing of the intestine through the wall of the abdomen

**eversion** /ɪ'vɜ:ʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the act of turning towards the outside or turning inside out. See illustration at **ANATOMICAL TERMS** in Supplement

**evertor** /ɪ'vɜ:tə/ *noun* a muscle which makes a limb turn outwards

**evidence-based** /'eɪvɪd(ə)ns beɪst/ *adjective* based on the results of well-designed trials of specific types of treatment for specific conditions ○ *evidence-based practice*

**evidence-based medicine** /'eɪvɪd(ə)ns beɪst ,med(ə)sn/ *noun* medical practice where findings from research are used as the basis for decisions

**evisceration** /ɪ,vɪsə'reɪf(ə)n/ *noun* the surgical removal of the abdominal viscera. Also called **exenteration**

**evolution** /ɪ,'və'lju:f(ə)n/ *noun* a process of change in organisms which takes place over a very long period involving many generations

**evulsion** /ɪ'vʌljən/ *noun* the act of extracting something by force

**Ewing's tumour** /'ju:ɪŋz 'tju:məl/, **Ewing's sarcoma** /,ju:ɪŋz sɑ:'kəʊmə/ *noun* a malignant tumour in the marrow of a long bone [Described 1922. After James Ewing (1866–1943), Professor of Pathology at Cornell University, New York, USA.]

**EWS** /ɪ:,dʌb(ə)ju:'es/ *noun* an 'early warning system' designed to alert healthcare professionals to new developments in technologies, pharmaceuticals and treatments

**ex-** /eks/ *prefix* same as **exo-** (*used before vowels*)

**exacerbation** /ɪŋ,zæəsə'beɪf(ə)n/ *noun* **1.** the fact of making a condition worse **2.** a period when a condition becomes worse

**exanthem** /ɪŋ'zæntəm/ *noun* a skin rash found with infectious diseases like measles or chickenpox

**exanthematous** /ɪ,eksæn'θemətəs/ *adjective* referring to an exanthem or like an exanthem

**exception** /ɪk'sepʃən/ *noun* **1.** something that does not fit into or is excluded from a general rule or pattern **2.** the act or condition of being excluded

**exchange transfusion** /ɪks,tʃeɪndʒ træns 'fju:z(ə)n/ *noun* a method of treating leukaemia or erythroblastosis in newborn babies, where almost all the blood is removed from the body and replaced with healthy blood

**excise** /ɪk'saɪz/ *verb* to cut something out

**excision** /ɪk'sɪz(ə)n/ *noun* an operation by a surgeon to cut and remove part of the body such as a growth. Compare **incision**

**excitation** /ɪ,eksɪ'teɪf(ə)n/ *noun* the state of being mentally or physically aroused

**excite** /ɪk'saɪt/ *verb* **1.** to stimulate someone or something **2.** to give an impulse to a nerve or muscle

**excoriation** /ɪks,kɔ:ri'eɪf(ə)n/ *noun* a raw skin surface or mucous membrane after rubbing or burning

**excrement** /'ekskrɪmənt/ *noun* same as **faeces**

**excrescence** /ɪk'skres(ə)ns/ *noun* a growth on the skin

**excreta** /ɪk'skri:tə/ *plural noun* waste material from the body, especially faeces

**excretion** /ɪk'skri:f(ə)n/ *noun* the act of passing waste matter, e.g. faeces, urine or sweat, out of the body

**excruciating** /ɪk'skru:ʃi:etɪŋ/ *adjective* extremely painful ○ *He had excruciating pains in his head.*

**exenteration** /ek,sentə'reɪf(ə)n/ *noun* same as **evisceration**

**exercise** /'eksəsaɪz/ *noun* **1.** physical or mental activity, especially the active use of the muscles as a way of keeping fit, correcting a deformity or strengthening a part ○ *Regular exercise is good for your heart.* ○ *He doesn't do or take enough exercise.* **2.** a particular movement or action designed to use and strengthen the muscles ■ *verb* to take exercise, or exert part of the body in exercise ○ *He exercises twice a day to keep fit.*

**exercise-induced asthma** /,eksəsəɪz ɪn ,dʒu:st 'æsmə/ *noun* asthma which is caused by exercise such as running or cycling. Abbreviation **EIA**

**exfoliation** /eks,fəʊli'eɪf(ə)n/ *noun* the loss of layers of tissue such as sunburnt skin

**exfoliative** /eks'fəʊliətɪv/ *adjective* referring to exfoliation

**exfoliative dermatitis** /eks,fəʊliətɪv ,dɜ:mə'taɪtɪs/ *noun* a typical form of dermatitis where the skin becomes red and comes off in flakes

**exhalation** /,ekshə'leɪf(ə)n/ *noun* the act of breathing out. Opposite **inhalation**

**exhale** /eks'heɪl/ *verb* to breathe out. Opposite **inhale**

**exhibitionism** /,eksɪ'bɪʃ(ə)nɪz(ə)m/ *noun* a desire to show the genitals to a person of the opposite sex

**exo-** /eksəʊ/ *prefix* out of, outside

**exocrine gland** /'eksəkraɪn glænd/ *noun* a gland with ducts which channel secretions to particular parts of the body such as the liver, the sweat glands, the pancreas and the salivary glands. Compare **endocrine gland**

**exogenous** /ek'sɒdʒənəs/ *adjective* developing or caused by something outside the organism. Compare **endogenous**

**exomphalos** /ek'sɒmfələs/ *noun* same as **umbilical hernia**

**exophthalmic goitre** /,eksɒfθælmɪk 'gɔ:ɪtə/ *noun* a form of hyperthyroidism, in which the neck swells and the eyes protrude. Also called **Graves' disease**

**exophthalmos** /,eksɒfθælməs/ *noun* protruding eyeballs

**exostosis** /,eksə'stəʊsɪs/ *noun* a benign growth on the surface of a bone

**exotic** /ɪg'zɒtɪk/ *adjective* referring to a disease which occurs in a foreign country

**exotoxin** /,eksəʊ'tɒksɪn/ *noun* a poison, produced by bacteria, which affects parts of the body away from the place of infection, e.g. the toxins which cause botulism or tetanus

**exotropia** /,eksəʊ'trəʊpiə/ *noun* same as **divergent strabismus**

**expectant mother** /ɪk,spektənt 'mʌðə/ *noun* a pregnant woman

**expectorant** /ɪk'spekt(ə)rənt/ *noun* a drug which helps someone to cough up phlegm

**expectoration** /ɪk,spektə'reɪf(ə)n/ *noun* the act of coughing up fluid or phlegm from the respiratory tract

**experiential learning** /ɪk,sprɪəriənʃəl 'lɜ:nɪŋ/ *noun* the process of learning from experience

**expert patient** /,ekspɜ:t 'peɪf(ə)nt/ *noun* a patient with a long-term illness who has been taught how to manage his or her own medical care

**expiration** /,ekspə'reɪf(ə)n/ *noun **1.** the act of breathing out, or pushing air out of the lungs ○ *Expiration takes place when the chest muscles relax and the lungs become smaller.* Opposite **inspiration** **2.** death*

**expire** /ɪk'spaɪə/ *verb* **1.** to breathe out **2.** to die

**exploration** /,eksplə'reɪf(ə)n/ *noun* a procedure or surgical operation where the aim is to discover the cause of symptoms or the nature and extent of an illness

**exploratory surgery** /ɪk,splɒrət(ə)rɪ 'sɜ:dʒəri/ *noun* a surgical operation in which the aim is to discover the cause of a person's symptoms or the nature and extent of an illness

**expression** /ɪk'spreʃ(ə)n/ *noun* **1.** the look on a person's face which shows what he or she thinks and feels ○ *His expression showed that he was annoyed.* **2.** the act of pushing something out of the body ○ *the expression of the fetus and placenta during childbirth*

**exsanguinate** /ɪk'sæŋgwɪneɪt/ *verb* to drain blood from the body

**exsanguination** /ɪk,sæŋgwɪ'neɪf(ə)n/ *noun* the removal of blood from the body

**extension** /ɪk'stenʃən/ *noun* **1.** the stretching or straightening out of a joint **2.** the stretching of a joint by traction

**extensor** /ɪk'stensə/, **extensor muscle** /ɪk'stensə ,mʌs(ə)l/ *noun* a muscle which makes a joint become straight. Compare **flexor**

**exterior** /ɪk'stɪəriəl/ *noun* the outside of something

**externa** /ɪk'stɜ:nə/ ♦ **otitis**

**external cardiac massage** /ɪk,stɜ:n(ə)l ,kɑ:diæk 'mæsɑ:ʒ/ *noun* a method of making someone's heart start beating again by rhythmic pressing on the breastbone

**external ear** /ɪk,stɜ:n(ə)l 'ɪə/ *noun* same as **outer ear**

**external haemorrhoids** /ɪk,stɜ:n(ə)l 'hemərɔɪdz/ *plural noun* haemorrhoids in the skin just outside the anus

**external iliac artery** /ɪk,stɜ:n(ə)l 'ɪliæk ,ɑ:təri/ *noun* an artery which branches from the aorta in the abdomen and leads to the leg

**external jugular** /ɪk,stɜ:n(ə)l 'dʒʌgʒələ/ *noun* the main jugular vein in the neck, leading from the temporal vein

**external nares** /ɪk,stɜ:n(ə)l 'neəri:z/ *plural noun* same as **anterior nares**

**external otitis** /ɪk,stɜːn(ə)l ə'taɪtɪs/ *noun* same as **otitis externa**

**external respiration** /ɪk,stɜːn(ə)l ˌrespɪ'reɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the part of respiration concerned with oxygen in the air being exchanged in the lungs for carbon dioxide from the blood

**exteroceptor** /'ɛkstrəʊseptə/ *noun* a sensory nerve which is affected by stimuli from outside the body, e.g. in the eye or ear

**extinction** /ɪk'stɪŋkʃən/ *noun* **1.** the destruction or stopping of something **2.** the lessening or stopping of a conditioned behavioural response through lack of reinforcement

**extirpation** /,ɛkstɜː'peɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the total removal of a structure, an organ or growth by surgery

**extra-** /ɛkstrə/ *prefix* outside

**extracapsular** /,ɛkstrə'kæpsjələ/ *adjective* outside a capsule

**extracapsular fracture** /,ɛkstrə,kæpsjələ'fræktʃəl/ *noun* a fracture of the upper part of the femur, which does not involve the capsule round the hip joint

**extracellular** /,ɛkstrə'seljələ/ *adjective* outside cells

**extracellular fluid** /,ɛkstrəsəljələ'fluɪd/ *noun* a fluid which surrounds cells

**extract** *noun* /'ɛkstrækt/ a preparation made by removing water or alcohol from a substance, leaving only the essence ■ *verb* /ɪk'strækt/ to take out something ○ *Adrenaline extracted from the animal's adrenal glands is used in the treatment of asthma.*

**extraction** /ɪk'strækʃən/ *noun* the removal of part of the body, especially a tooth

**extradural** /,ɛkstrə'djuərəl/ *adjective* same as **epidural**

**extradural haematoma** /,ɛkstrə,djuərəl'hɪ:mə'təʊmə/ *noun* a blood clot which forms in the head outside the dura mater, caused by a blow

**extradural haemorrhage** /,ɛkstrə,djuərəl'hɛm(ə)rɪdʒ/ *noun* a serious condition where bleeding occurs between the dura mater and the skull

**extraembryonic membranes** /,ɛkstrəembri,ɒnɪk'membreɪnz/ *plural noun* membranes which are not part of the embryo

**extrapleural** /,ɛkstrə'pluərəl/ *adjective* outside the pleural cavity

**extrapyramidal** /,ɛkstrə'pɪræmɪd(ə)l/ *adjective* outside the pyramidal tracts

**extrapyramidal system** /,ɛkstrə'pɪræmɪd(ə)l'sɪstəm/ *noun* a motor system which carries motor nerves outside the pyramidal system

**extrapyramidal tracts** /,ɛkstrə'pɪræmɪd(ə)l'træktz/ *plural noun* same as **extrapyramidal system**

**extrasensory** /,ɛkstrə'sensəri/ *adjective* involving perception by means other than the usual five senses

**extrasystole** /,ɛkstrə'sɪstəli/ *noun* same as **ectopic heartbeat**

**extrauterine** /,ɛkstrə'juːtəriːn/ *adjective* occurring or developing outside the uterus

**extrauterine pregnancy** /,ɛkstrə'juːtəriːn'pregnənsi/ *noun* same as **ectopic pregnancy**

**extravasation** /ɛk,strævə'seɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a situation where a bodily fluid, such as blood or secretions, escapes into tissue

**extraversion** /,ɛkstrə'vɜːʃ(ə)n/ *noun* same as **extroversion**

**extravert** /'ɛkstrəvɜːt/ *noun* same as **extrovert**

**extremities** /ɪk'stremətɪz/ *plural noun* the parts of the body at the ends of limbs, e.g. the fingers, toes, nose and ears

**extremity** /ɪk'stremɪti/ *noun* **1.** a limb **2.** the part of a limb farthest away from the body, especially the hand or foot **3.** a situation or state of great distress or danger **4.** the greatest intensity of something

**extrinsic** /ɛks'trɪnsɪk/ *adjective* external, originating outside a structure

**extrinsic factor** /ɛks'trɪnsɪk'fæktə/ *noun* a former term for vitamin B<sub>12</sub>, which is necessary for the production of red blood cells

**extrinsic muscle** /ɛks'trɪnsɪk'mʌs(ə)l/ *noun* a muscle which is some way away from the part of the body which it operates

**extroversion** /ɛkstrə'vɜːʃ(ə)n/ *noun* **1.** (in *psychology*) a condition in which a person is interested in people and things other than themselves **2.** a congenital turning of an organ inside out

**extrovert** /'ɛkstrəvɜːt/ *noun* a person who is interested in people and things in the external world

**extubation** /,ɛkstjuː'beɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the removal of a tube after intubation

**eye** /aɪ/ *noun* the part of the body with which a person sees (NOTE: For other terms referring to the eye, see **ocular**, **optic** and words beginning with **oculo-**, **ophth-**, **ophthalm-**, **ophthalmo-**)

**eyeball** /'aɪbɔːl/ *noun* the round ball of tissue through which light passes, located in the eye socket and controlled by various muscles

**eyebrow** /'aɪbraʊ/ *noun* an arch of skin with a line of hair above the eye

**eye drops** /'aɪ drɒps/ *plural noun* medicine in liquid form which is put into the eye in small amounts

**eyelash** /'aɪlæʃ/ *noun* a small hair which grows out from the edge of the eyelid

**eyelid** /'aɪlɪd/ *noun* a piece of skin which covers the eye. Also called **blepharon**, **palpebra**



(NOTE: For other terms referring to the eyelids, see words beginning with **blephar-**, **blepharo-**.)

**eye socket** /'aɪ ,sɒkɪt/ *noun* same as **orbit**

**eyestrain** /'aɪstreɪn/ *noun* tiredness in the muscles of the eye with a headache, which may be caused by an activity such as reading in bad light

or working on a computer screen. Also called **asthenopia**

**eyetooth** /'aɪtu:θ/ *noun* a canine tooth, one of two pairs of pointed teeth next to the incisors (NOTE: The plural is **eyeteeth**.)

# F

**F** *abbreviation* Fahrenheit

**face** /feɪs/ *noun* the front part of the head, where the eyes, nose and mouth are placed ■ *verb* to have your face towards or to look towards something ○ *Please face the screen.*

**face delivery** /'feɪs dɪˌlɪv(ə)rɪ/ *noun* a birth where the baby's face appears first

**face lift** /'feɪs ˌlɪft/, **face-lifting operation** /'feɪs ˌlɪftɪŋ ɒpəˌreɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a surgical operation to remove wrinkles on the face and neck

**face presentation** /'feɪs prez(ə)nˌteɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a position of a baby in the uterus where the face will appear first at birth

**facet** /'fæst/ *noun* a flat surface on a bone

**facet syndrome** /'fæst ˌsɪndrəʊm/ *noun* a condition in which a joint in the vertebrae becomes dislocated

**facial** /'feɪʃ(ə)/ *adjective* relating to, or appearing on, the face ○ *The psychiatrist examined the patient's facial expression.*

**facial bone** /'feɪʃ(ə)l bæʊn/ *noun* one of the fourteen bones which form the face

COMMENT: The bones which make up the face are: two maxillae forming the upper jaw; two nasal bones forming the top part of the nose; two lacrimal bones on the inside of the orbit near the nose; two zygomatic or malar bones forming the sides of the cheeks; two palatine bones forming the back part of the top of the mouth; two nasal conchae or turbinate bones which form the sides of the nasal cavity; the mandible or lower jaw; and the vomer in the centre of the nasal septum.

**facial paralysis** /'feɪʃ(ə)l pəˌræləʊsɪs/ *noun* same as **Bell's palsy**

**facies** /'feɪʃi:z/ *noun* someone's facial appearance, used as a guide to diagnosis

**factor** /'fæktə/ *noun* 1. something which has an influence or which makes something else take place 2. a substance, variously numbered, e.g. Factor I, Factor II, in the plasma, which makes the blood coagulate when a blood vessel is injured

**Factor II** /,fæktə 'tu:/ *noun* same as **prothrombin**

**Factor IX** /,fæktə 'naɪn/ *noun* a protein in plasma which promotes the clotting of blood and

is lacking in people with haemophilia B. Also called **Christmas factor**

**Factor VIII** /,fæktə 'eɪt/ *noun* a protein in plasma which promotes the clotting of blood and is lacking in people with haemophilia A

**Factor XI** /,fæktə ɪ'lev(ə)n/ *noun* a protein in plasma which promotes the clotting of blood and is lacking in people with haemophilia C

**Factor XII** /,fæktə 'twelv/ *noun* a protein in plasma which promotes the clotting of blood and is lacking in some people with haemophilia. Also called **Hageman factor**

**fade away** /,feɪd ə'weɪ/ *verb* to be in the process of dying (*informal*)

**faecal** /'fi:k(ə)/ *adjective* referring to faeces

**faecal impaction** /,fi:k(ə)l ɪm'pækʃən/ *noun* a condition in which a hardened mass of faeces stays in the rectum

**faecal incontinence** /,fi:k(ə)l ɪn 'kɒntɪnəns/ *noun* an inability to control the bowel movements

**faecalith** /'fi:kəliθ/ *noun* same as **coprolith**

**faecal matter** /'fi:k(ə)l ˌmætə/ *noun* solid waste matter from the bowels

**faeces** /'fi:sɪz/ *plural noun* solid waste matter passed from the bowels through the anus. Also called **stools**, **bowel movement** (NOTE: For other terms referring to faeces, see words beginning with **stercero**.)

**Fahrenheit** /'færənhaɪt/, **Fahrenheit scale** /'færənhaɪt skeɪl/ *noun* a scale of temperatures where the freezing and boiling points of water are 32° and 212° under standard atmospheric pressure (NOTE: Used in the US, but less common in the UK. Usually written as an **F** after the degree sign: 32°**F** (say: 'thirty-two degrees Fahrenheit').)

**fail** /feɪl/ *verb* 1. not to be successful in doing something ○ *The doctor failed to see the symptoms.* ○ *She has failed her pharmacy exams.* ○ *He failed his medical and was rejected by the police force.* 2. to become weaker and less likely to recover

**failure to thrive** /,feɪljə tə 'θraɪv/ *noun* same as **marasmus**

**faint** /feɪnt/ *verb* to stop being conscious for a short time and, usually, fall down ■ *noun* a loss of consciousness for a short period, caused by a temporary reduction in the blood flow to the brain

**fainting fit** /'feɪntɪŋ fɪt/, **fainting spell** /'feɪntɪŋ spel/ *noun* same as **syncope** ○ *She often had fainting fits when she was dieting.*

**Fairbanks' splint** /'feəbæŋks splɪnt/ *noun* a special splint used for correcting Erb's palsy

**faith healing** /'feɪθ, 'hi:lɪŋ/ *noun* the treatment of pain or illness by a person who prays and may also lay his or her hands on the patient

**falciform** /'fælɪsɪfɔ:m/ *adjective* in the shape of a sickle

**falciform ligament** /,fælɪsɪfɔ:m 'lɪgəmənt/ *noun* a piece of tissue which separates the two lobes of the liver and attaches it to the diaphragm

**fallen arches** /,fɔ:lən 'ɑ:tʃɪz/ *plural noun* a condition in which the arches in the sole of the foot are not high

**Fallopian tube** /fə'leɪpɪən tju:z/ *noun* one of two tubes which connect the ovaries to the uterus. See illustration at **UROGENITAL SYSTEM (FEMALE)** in Supplement. Also called **oviduct**, **salpinx** (NOTE: For other terms referring to Fallopian tubes, see words beginning with **salping-**, **salpingo-**) [Described 1561. After Gabriele Fallopio (1523–63), Italian man of medicine. He was Professor of Surgery and Anatomy at Padua, where he was also Professor of Botany.]

**Fallot's tetralogy** /,fæləʊz te'trælədʒi/ *noun* same as **tetralogy of Fallot**

**false rib** /,fɔ:ls 'rɪb/ *noun* one of the bottom five ribs on each side which are not directly attached to the breastbone

**familial** /fə'mɪliəl/ *adjective* referring to a family

**familial adenomatous polyposis** /fə,mɪliəl ædə,nəmətəs ,pɒlɪ'pəʊsɪs/ *noun* a hereditary disorder where polyps develop in the small intestine. Abbreviation **FAP**

**familial disorder** /fə,mɪliəl dɪs'ɔ:də/ *noun* a hereditary disorder which affects several members of the same family

**family** /'fæm(ə)li/ *noun* a group of people who are related to each other, especially mother, father and children

**family doctor** /,fæm(ə)li 'dɒktə/ *noun* a general practitioner

**family planning** /,fæm(ə)li 'plænɪŋ/ *noun* the use of contraception to control the number of children in a family

**family planning clinic** /,fæm(ə)li 'plænɪŋ ,kɪnɪk/ *noun* a clinic which gives advice on contraception

**family therapy** /,fæm(ə)li 'θerəpi/ *noun* a type of psychotherapy where members of the family of a person with a disorder meet a therapist to discuss the condition and try to come to terms with it

**famotidine** /fə'mɒtɪdɪ:n/ *noun* a histamine which reduces the secretion of gastric acid and is used to treat ulcers

**Fanconi syndrome** /fæn'kəʊni ,sɪndrəm/ *noun* a kidney disorder where amino acids are present in the urine [Described 1927. After Guido Fanconi (1892–1979), Professor of Paediatrics at the University of Zurich, Switzerland.]

**fantasy** /'fæntəsi/ *noun* a series of imaginary events which someone believes really took place

**FAP** *abbreviation* familial adenomatous polyposis

**farcy** /'fɑ:si/ *noun* a form of glanders which affects the lymph nodes

**farmer's lung** /,fɑ:məz 'lʌŋ/ *noun* a type of asthma caused by an allergy to rotting hay

**fascia** /'feɪʒə/ *noun* fibrous tissue covering a muscle or an organ (NOTE: The plural is **fasciae**.)

**fasciculation** /fə,sɪkju'leɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* small muscle movements which appear as trembling skin

**fasciculus** /fə'sɪkju'ləs/ *noun* a bundle of nerve fibres (NOTE: The plural is **fasciculi**.)

**fasciitis** /,fæʃi'aɪtɪs/ *noun* an inflammation of the connective tissue between muscles or around organs

**fastigium** /fæ'stɪdʒɪəm/ *noun* the highest temperature during a bout of fever

**fat** /fæt/ *adjective* big and round in the body ○ *You ought to eat less – you're getting too fat.* (NOTE: **fatter** – **fattest**) ■ *noun* **1.** a white oily substance in the body, which stores energy and protects the body against cold **2.** a type of food which supplies protein and Vitamins A and D, especially that part of meat which is white, and solid substances like lard or butter produced from animals and used for cooking, or liquid substances like oil ○ *If you don't like the fat on the meat, cut it off.* ○ *Fry the eggs in some fat.* (NOTE: **Fat** has no plural when it means the substance; the plural **fats** is used to mean different types of fat. For other terms referring to fats, see also **lipid** and words beginning with **steato-**.)

**fatigue** /fə'tɪ:g/ *noun* very great tiredness

**fatigue fracture** /fə'tɪ:g ,fræktʃə/ *noun* ▶ **stress fracture**

**fatty** /'fæti/ *adjective* containing fat

**fatty acid** /,fæti 'æsɪd/ *noun* an organic acid belonging to a group that occurs naturally as fats, oils and waxes. ◊ **essential fatty acid**

**fatty degeneration** /,fæti dɪ,dʒənə'reɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* same as **adipose degeneration**

**fauces** /'fɔ:si:z/ *noun* an opening between the tonsils at the back of the throat, leading to the pharynx

**FDA** *abbreviation* US Food and Drug Administration

**fear** /fɪə/ *noun* a state where a person is afraid of something ○ *fear of flying*

**febricula** /fe'brɪkjʊlə/ *noun* a low fever

**febrifuge** /'febrɪfju:dʒ/ *noun* a drug which prevents or lowers a fever, e.g. aspirin ■ *adjective* preventing or lowering fever

**febrile** /'fi:brɪl/ *adjective* referring to a fever, or caused by a fever

**febrile convulsion** /,fi:brɪl kən'vʌlʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a convulsion in a child, lasting a short time, associated with a fever

**febrile disease** /'fi:brɪl dɪ,zɪ:z/ *noun* a disease which is accompanied by fever

**fecundation** /,fekən'detʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the act of bringing male and female reproductive matter together. Also called **fertilisation**

**feedback** /'fi:dbæk/ *noun* **1.** information or comments about something which has been done ○ *The initial feedback from patients on the new service was encouraging.* **2.** the linking of the result of an action back to the action itself

**Fehling's solution** /'feɪlɪŋz sə,lju:f(ə)n/ *noun* a solution used in Fehling's test to detect sugar in urine [Described 1848. After Hermann Christian von Fehling (1812–85), Professor of Chemistry at Stuttgart, Germany.]

**Fehling's test** /'feɪlɪŋz test/ *noun* a test for the presence of aldehydes and sugars in a biological sample by means of Fehling's solution

**felon** /'felən/ *noun* same as **whitlow**

**Felty's syndrome** /'felti:z ,sɪndrəʊm/ *noun* a condition, associated with rheumatoid arthritis, in which the spleen is enlarged and the number of white blood cells increases [Described 1924. After Augustus Roi Felty (1895–1963), physician at Hartford Hospital, Connecticut, USA.]

**female condom** /,fi:meɪl 'kɒndɒm/ *noun* a rubber sheath inserted into the vagina before intercourse, covering the walls of the vagina and the cervix

**female sex hormone** /,fi:meɪl 'seks ,hɔ:məʊn/ *noun* same as **oestrogen**

**feminisation** /,femɪnaɪ'zeɪʃ(ə)n/, **feminization** *noun* the development of female characteristics in a male

**femoral** /'femərəl/ *adjective* referring to the femur or to the thigh

**femoral artery** /,femərəl 'ɑ:təri/ *noun* a continuation of the external iliac artery, which runs down the front of the thigh and then crosses to the back of the thigh

**femoral canal** /,femərəl kə'næl/ *noun* the inner tube of the sheath surrounding the femoral artery and vein

**femoral head** /,femərəl 'hed/ *noun* the head of the femur, the rounded projecting end part of the thigh bone which joins the acetabulum at the hip

**femoral hernia** /,femərəl 'hɜ:niə/ *noun* a hernia of the bowel at the top of the thigh

**femoral neck** /,femərəl 'nek/ *noun* the narrow part between the head and the diaphysis of the femur. Also called **neck of the femur**

**femoral nerve** /'femərəl nə:z/ *noun* a nerve which governs the muscle at the front of the thigh

**femoral pulse** /,femərəl 'pʌls/ *noun* a pulse taken in the groin

**femoral triangle** /,femərəl 'traɪæŋɡəl/ *noun* a slight hollow in the groin which contains the femoral vessels and nerve. Also called **Scarpa's triangle**

**femoral vein** /'femərəl veɪn/ *noun* a vein running up the upper leg, a continuation of the popliteal vein

**femur** /'fi:mə/ *noun* the bone in the top part of the leg which joins the acetabulum at the hip and the tibia at the knee. Also called **thighbone**. See illustration at **PELVIS** in Supplement (NOTE: The plural is **femora**.)

**-fen** /fen/ *suffix* used in names of non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs ○ *ibuprofen*

**fenestra** /fə'nestrə/ *noun* a small opening in the ear

**fenestra ovalis** /fə,nestrə əv'vɑ:ɪls/ *noun* same as **oval window**

**fenestra rotunda** /fə,nestrə rəu'tʌndə/ *noun* same as **round window**

**fenestration** /,fenə'streɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a surgical operation to relieve deafness by making a small opening in the inner ear

**fenoprofen** /,fenəu'prɒufen/ *noun* a non-steroidal, anti-inflammatory drug that is used to manage the pain of arthritis

**fantanyl** /'fentənl/ *noun* a narcotic drug that is a powerful painkiller

**fermentation** /,fɜ:men'teɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a process where carbohydrates are broken down by enzymes from yeast and produce alcohol. Also called **zymosis**

**ferric** /'ferɪk/ *adjective* containing iron with a valency of three

**ferritin** /'ferɪtɪn/ *noun* a protein found in the liver that binds reversibly to iron and stores it for later use in making haemoglobin in red blood cells

**ferrous** /'ferəs/ *adjective* containing iron with a valency of two

**ferrous sulphate** /,ferəs 'sʌlfet/ *noun* a white or pale green iron salt that is used in the treatment of iron-deficient anaemia

**ferrule** /'feru:l/ *noun* a metal or rubber cap or ring that strengthens and protects the lower end of a crutch or walking stick ■ *verb* to fit a ferrule onto a crutch or walking stick

**fertile** /'fɜ:təɪl/ *adjective* able to produce children. Opposite **sterile**

**fertilisation** /,fɜ:ʔɪlaɪ'zeɪf(ə)n/, **fertilization** *noun* the joining of an ovum and a sperm to form a zygote and so start the development of an embryo

**fertility** /fɜ:'tɪlɪti/ *noun* the fact of being fertile. Opposite **sterility**

**fertility rate** /fɜ:'tɪlɪti reɪt/ *noun* the number of births per year calculated per 1000 females aged between 15 and 44

**FESS** *abbreviation* functional endoscopic sinus surgery

**fester** /'festə/ *verb* (of an infected wound) to become inflamed and produce pus ○ *His legs were covered with festering sores.*

**festination** /,festɪ'neɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a way of walking in which a person takes short steps, seen in people who have Parkinson's disease

**fetal** /'fi:t(ə)/ *adjective* referring to a fetus

**fetal alcohol syndrome** /,fi:t(ə)l 'ælkə'hɒl ,sɪndrəʊm/ *noun* damage caused to the fetus by alcohol in the blood of the mother, which affects the growth of the embryo, including its facial and brain development. Abbreviation **FAS**

**fetal dystocia** /,fi:t(ə)l dɪs'təʊsiə/ *noun* a difficult childbirth caused by a malformation or malpresentation of the fetus

**fetal heart** /,fi:t(ə)l 'hɑ:t/ *noun* the heart of the fetus

**fetal monitor** /,fi:t(ə)l 'mɒnɪtə/ *noun* an electronic device which monitors the fetus in the uterus

**fetal position** /'fi:t(ə)l pə,zɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a position where a person lies curled up on his or her side, like a fetus in the uterus

**fetishism** /'fetɪʃɪz(ə)m/, **fetichism** *noun* a psychological disorder in which someone gets sexual satisfaction from touching objects

**feto-** /'fi:təʊ/ *prefix* fetus

**fetoprotein** /,fi:təʊ'prəʊtɪ:n/ *noun* ▶ **alpha-fetoprotein**

**fetor** /'fi:tə/ *noun* a bad smell

**fetoscope** /'fi:təskəʊp/ *noun* a stethoscope used in fetoscopy

**fetoscopy** /'fi:təskəpi/ *noun* an examination of a fetus inside the uterus, taking blood samples to diagnose blood disorders

**fetus** /'fi:təs/ *noun* an unborn baby from two months after conception until birth, before which it is called an embryo

**FEV** *abbreviation* forced expiratory volume

**fever** /'fi:və/ *noun* **1.** a rise in body temperature ○ *She is running a slight fever.* ○ *You must stay in bed until the fever has gone down.* **2.** a condition when the temperature of the body is higher than usual ▶ also called **pyrexia**

**fever blister** /'fi:və ,blɪstəl/ *noun* same as **fever sore**

**fever sore** /'fi:və sɔ:z/ *noun* a cold sore or burning sore, usually on the lips

**fiber** /'faɪbə/ *noun* *US* same as **fibre**

**fib-** /faɪbr/ *prefix* referring to fibres, fibrous (*used before vowels*)

**-fibrate** /faɪbreɪt/ *suffix* used in names of lipid-lowering drugs

**fibre** /'faɪbə/ *noun* **1.** a structure in the body shaped like a thread **2.** same as **dietary fibre**

**fibre optics** /,faɪbər 'ɒptɪks/, **fiberoptics** /,faɪbər'ɒptɪks/ *noun* the use of thin fibres which conduct light and images to examine internal organs

**fibrescope** /'faɪbəskəʊp/ *noun* a device made of bundles of optical fibres which is passed into the body, used for examining internal organs

**fibrillation** /,faɪbrɪ'leɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the fluttering of a muscle

**fibrin** /'fɪbrɪn/ *noun* a protein produced by fibrinogen, which helps make blood coagulate

**fibrin foam** /'fɪbrɪn fəʊm/ *noun* a white material made artificially from fibrinogen, used to prevent bleeding

**fibrinogen** /fɪ'brɪnədʒən/ *noun* a substance in blood plasma which produces fibrin when activated by thrombin

**fibrinolysin** /,fɪbrɪ'nɒləsɪn/ *noun* an enzyme which digests fibrin. Also called **plasmin**

**fibrinolysis** /,fɪbrɪ'nɒləsɪs/ *noun* the removal of blood clots from the system by the action of fibrinolysin on fibrin. Also called **thrombolysis**

**fibrinolytic** /,fɪbrɪnə'lytɪk/ *adjective* referring to fibrinolysis ○ *fibrinolytic drugs* Also called **thrombolytic**

**fibro-** /faɪbrəʊ/ *prefix* referring to fibres

**fibroadenoma** /,faɪbrəʊ.ædɪ'nəʊmə/ *noun* a benign tumour formed of fibrous and glandular tissue

**fibroblast** /'faɪbrəʊblæst/ *noun* a long flat cell found in connective tissue, which develops into collagen

**fibrocartilage** /,faɪbrəʊ'kɑ:tɪləɪdʒ/ *noun* cartilage and fibrous tissue combined

**fibrochondritis** /,faɪbrəʊkɒn'draɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the fibrocartilage

**fibrocyst** /'faɪbrəʊsɪst/ *noun* a benign tumour of fibrous tissue

**fibrocystic** /,faɪbrəʊ'sɪstɪk/ *adjective* referring to a fibrocyst

**fibrocystic disease** /,faɪbrəʊ'sɪstɪk dɪ,zɪ:z/, **fibrocystic disease of the pancreas** /,faɪbrəʊ ,sɪstɪk dɪ,zɪ:z əv ðə 'pæŋkriəs/ *noun* same as **cystic fibrosis**

**fibrocyte** /'faɪbrəʊsaɪt/ *noun* a cell which derives from a fibroblast and is found in connective tissue

**fibroid** /'faɪbrɔɪd/ *adjective* like fibre

**fibroid tumour** /,faɪbrɔɪd 'tju:məl/ *noun* a benign tumour in the muscle fibres of the uterus. Also called **uterine fibroid**, **fibromyoma**

**fibroma** /faɪ'brəʊmə/ *noun* a small benign tumour formed in connective tissue

**fibromyoma** /,faɪbrəʊmaɪ'əʊmə/ *noun* same as **fibroid tumour**

**fibroplasia** /,faɪbrəʊ'plɛziə/ *noun* ▶ **retrolental fibroplasia**

**fibrosarcoma** /,faɪbrəʊsɑ:kəʊmə/ *noun* a malignant tumour of the connective tissue, most common in the legs

**fibrosis** /faɪ'brəʊsɪs/ *noun* the process of replacing damaged tissue by scar tissue

**fibrositis** /,faɪbrəʊ'saɪtɪs/ *noun* a painful inflammation of the fibrous tissue which surrounds muscles and joints, especially the muscles of the back

**fibrous** /'faɪbrəs/ *adjective* made of fibres, or like fibre

**fibrous capsule** /,faɪbrəs 'kæpsju:l/ *noun* fibrous tissue surrounding a kidney. Also called **renal capsule**

**fibrous joint** /'faɪbrəs dʒɔɪnt/ *noun* a joint where fibrous tissue holds two bones together so that they cannot move, as in the bones of the skull

**fibrous pericardium** /,faɪbrəs pərɪ'kɑ:dɪəm/ *noun* the outer part of the pericardium which surrounds the heart, and is attached to the main blood vessels

**fibrous tissue** /,faɪbrəs 'tɪʃu:/ *noun* strong white tissue which makes tendons and ligaments and also scar tissue

**fibula** /'fɪbjʊlə/ *noun* the thinner of the two bones in the lower leg between the knee and the ankle. Compare **tibia** (NOTE: The plural is **fibulae**.)

**fibular** /'fɪbjʊlə/ *adjective* referring to the fibula

**field of vision** /,fi:ld əv 'vɪʒ(ə)n/ *noun* same as **visual field**

**fight or flight reaction** /,faɪt ɔ: 'flaɪt rɪ ,ækjən/ *noun* the theory that an organism which is faced with a threat reacts either by preparing to fight or to escape

**fil-** /fɪl/ *prefix* referring to a thread

**filament** /'fɪləmənt/ *noun* a long thin structure like a thread

**filamentous** /,fɪlə'mentəs/ *adjective* like a thread

**Filaria** /fɪ'leəriə/ *noun* a thin parasitic worm which is found especially in the lymph system, and is passed to humans by mosquitoes (NOTE: The plural is **Filariæ**.)

**filariasis** /,fɪlə'raɪəsɪs/ *noun* a tropical disease caused by parasitic threadworms in the lymph system, transmitted by mosquito bites

**filiform** /'fɪlɪfɔ:m/ *adjective* shaped like a thread

**filiform papillae** /,fɪlɪfɔ:m pə'pɪli:/ *plural noun* papillae on the tongue which are shaped like threads, and have no taste buds

**filipuncture** /'fɪlɪpʌŋktʃə/ *noun* the procedure of putting a wire into an aneurysm to cause blood clotting

**filling** /'fɪlɪŋ/ *noun* a surgical operation carried out by a dentist to fill a hole in a tooth with amalgam

**filter** /'fɪltə/ *noun* a piece of paper or cloth through which a liquid is passed to remove any solid substances in it ■ *verb* to pass a liquid through a membrane, piece of paper or cloth to remove solid substances ○ *Impurities are filtered from the blood by the kidneys.*

**FIM** *abbreviation* functional independence measure

**fimbria** /'fɪmbriə/ *noun* a fringe, especially the fringe of hair-like processes at the end of a Fallopian tube near the ovaries (NOTE: The plural is **fimbriae**.)

**finger** /'fɪŋgə/ *noun* one of the five parts at the end of the hand, but usually not including the thumb (NOTE: The names of the fingers are: **little finger**, **third finger** or **ring finger**, **middle finger**, **forefinger** or **index finger**.)

**finger-nose test** /,fɪŋgə 'nəʊz ,test/ *noun* a test of coordination, where the person is asked to close their eyes, stretch out their arm and then touch their nose with their index finger

**fingerprint** /'fɪŋgəprɪnt/ *noun* a mark left by a finger when something is touched. ◊ **genetic fingerprint**

**firm** /fɜ:m/ *noun* a group of doctors and consultants in a hospital, especially one to which a trainee doctor is attached during clinical studies (*informal*)

**first aid** /,fɜ:st 'eɪd/ *noun* help given by a non-medical person to someone who is suddenly ill or injured before full-scale medical treatment can be given ○ *She gave him first aid in the street until the ambulance arrived.*

**first-aid kit** /,fɜ:st 'eɪd ,kɪt/ *noun* a box with bandages and dressings kept ready to be used in an emergency

**first-aid post** /,fɜ:st 'eɪd ,pəʊst/, **first-aid station** /,fɜ:st 'eɪd ,steɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a place where injured people can be taken for immediate care

**first-degree burn** /,fɜ:st dɪ'gri: 'bɜ:n/ *noun* a former classification of the severity of a burn, where the skin turns red

**first-degree haemorrhoids** /,fɜ:st dɪ'gri: 'hemərəɪdz/ *plural noun* haemorrhoids which remain in the rectum

**first-degree relative** /,fɜ:st dɪ'gri: 'relətɪv/ *noun* a relative with whom an individual shares 50% of their genes, e.g. a father, mother, sibling or child

**first intention** /fɜ:st ɪn'tenʃən/ *noun* the healing of a clean wound where the tissue forms again rapidly and no prominent scar is left

**first-level nurse** /fɜ:st ,lev(ə)l 'nɜ:s/, **first-level Registered Nurse** /fɜ:st ,lev(ə)l ,redʒɪstəd 'nɜ:s/ *noun* a nurse who has passed qualifying examinations, is registered as such with the Nursing and Midwifery Council and can act in an independent decision-making role. Compare **second-level nurse**

**fission** /'fɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the act of dividing into two or more parts

**fissure** /'fɪʃə/ *noun* a crack or groove in the skin, tissue or an organ

**fistula** /'fɪstjələ/ *noun* a passage or opening which has been made unusually between two organs, often near the rectum or anus

**fit** /fɪt/ *adjective* strong and physically healthy ○ *She exercises every day to keep fit.* ○ *The doctors decided the patient was not fit for surgery.* (NOTE: **fitter – fittest**)

■ *noun* a sudden attack of a disorder, especially convulsions and epilepsy ○ *She had a fit of coughing.* ○ *He had an epileptic fit.* ○ *The baby had a series of fits.* ■ **verb** 1. to provide a piece of equipment for someone to use ○ *She was fitted with temporary support.* 2. to have convulsions ○ *The patient has fitted twice.* (NOTE: **fitting – fitted**). Note also: you fit someone **with** an appliance.)

**fitness** /'fɪtnəs/ *noun* the fact of being strong and healthy ○ *Being in the football team demands a high level of physical fitness.* ○ *He had to pass a fitness test to join the police force.*

**5-hydroxy-tryptamine** /ˌfaɪv haɪˌdrɒksi ˈtrɪptəmɪn/ *noun* a compound which exists in blood platelets and is released after tissue is injured, and is a neurotransmitter important in sleep, mood and vasoconstriction. Also called **serotonin**

**fixated** /fɪk'seɪtɪd/ *adjective* referring to a person who has too close an attachment to another person, often to a parent

**fixator** /fɪk'seɪtə/ *noun* a metal rod placed through a bone to keep a part of the body rigid

**flaccid** /'flæksɪd, 'flæsɪd/ *adjective* soft or flabby

**flaccidity** /flæk'sɪdɪti, flæ'sɪdɪti/ *noun* the state of being flaccid

**Flagyl** /'flædzajl/ a trade name for metronidazole

**flail** /fleɪl/ *verb* to thrash around with uncontrollable or violent movements, particularly of the arms

**flail chest** /fleɪl tʃest/ *noun* a condition in which the chest is not stable, because several ribs have been broken

**flap** /flæp/ *noun* a flat piece attached to something, especially a piece of skin or tissue still attached to the body at one side and used in grafts

**flare** /fleə/ *noun* red colouring of the skin at an infected spot or in urticaria

**flashback** /'flæʃbæk/ *noun* a repeated and very vivid memory of a traumatic event

**flat foot** /flæt 'fʊt/, **flat feet** /flæt 'fi:t/ *noun* a condition in which the soles of the feet lie flat on the ground instead of being arched as usual. Also called **pes planus**

**flatulence** /'flætjələns/ *noun* gas or air which collects in the stomach or intestines causing discomfort

COMMENT: Flatulence is generally caused by indigestion, but can be made worse if the person swallows air (**aerophagy**).

**flatulent** /'flætjələnt/ *adjective* having flatulence, or caused by flatulence

**flatus** /'fleɪtəs/ *noun* air and gas which collects in the intestines and is painful

**flea** /fli:/ *noun* a tiny insect which sucks blood and is a parasite on animals and humans

**flecainide** /fle'keɪnaɪd/ *noun* a drug that helps to correct an irregular heartbeat

**flex** /fleks/ *verb* to bend something

**flexibilitas cerea** /fleksɪbɪlɪtəs 'sɛəriə/ *noun* a condition in which, if someone's arms or legs are moved, they remain in that set position for some time

**flexion** /'flekʃən/ *noun* the act of bending a joint

**Flexner's bacillus** /fleksnəz bə'sɪləs/ *noun* a bacterium which causes bacillary dysentery

**flexor** /'fleksə/, **flexor muscle** /'fleksə ,mʌs(ə)l/ *noun* a muscle which makes a joint bend. Compare **extensor**

**flexure** /'flekʃə/ *noun* 1. a bend in an organ 2. a fold in the skin

**floaters** /'fləʊtəz/ *plural noun* same as **muscae volitantes**

**floating kidney** /fləʊtɪŋ 'kɪdnɪ/ *noun* same as **nephroptosis**

**floating rib** /fləʊtɪŋ 'rɪb/ *noun* one of the two lowest ribs on each side, which are not attached to the breastbone

**flooding** /'flʌdɪŋ/ *noun* same as **menorrhagia**

**floppy baby syndrome** /flɒpi 'beɪbi ,sɪndrəʊm/ *noun* same as **amyotonia congenita**

**flora** /'flɔ:rə/ *noun* bacteria which exist in a particular part of the body

**florid** /'flɒrɪd/ *adjective* with an unhealthily glowing pink or red complexion

**flowmeter** /'fləʊmɪ:tə/ *noun* a meter attached to a pipe, e.g. as in anaesthetic equipment, to measure the speed at which a liquid or gas moves in the pipe

**flu** /flu:/ *noun* 1. same as **influenza** 2. a very bad cold (*informal*) (NOTE: Sometimes written **flu** to show it is a short form of **influenza**.)

**flucloxacillin** /flu:'klɒksəsiɪn/ *noun* a drug related to penicillin and effective against streptococcal infections and pneumonia

**fluconazole** /flu:'kɒnəzəʊl/ *noun* a drug used to treat fungal infections such as candidiasis

**fluctuation** /,flʌktʃu'eɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the feeling of movement of liquid inside part of the body or inside a cyst when pressed by the fingers

**fluid** /'flu:ɪd/ *noun* **1.** a liquid **2.** any gas, liquid or powder which flows

**fluid balance** /'flu:ɪd ,bæləns/ *noun* the maintenance of the balance of fluids in the body during dialysis or other treatment

**flake** /flu:k/ *noun* a parasitic flatworm which settles inside the liver, in the bloodstream and in other parts of the body

**flunitrazepam** /,flu:nai'træzɪpæm/ *noun* a tranquilliser that, because of its association with 'date rape' cases, is a controlled drug in the UK

**fluorescence** /fluə'res(ə)ns/ *noun* the sending out of light from a substance which is receiving radiation

**fluorescent** /fluə'res(ə)nt/ *adjective* referring to a substance which sends out light

**fluoride** /'fluəraɪd/ *noun* a chemical compound of fluorine and sodium, potassium or tin ○ *fluoride toothpaste*

**fluorine** /'fluəri:n/ *noun* a chemical element found in bones and teeth (NOTE: The chemical symbol is F)

**fluoroscope** /'fluərəskəʊp/ *noun* an apparatus which projects an X-ray image of a part of the body onto a screen, so that the part of the body can be examined as it moves

**fluoroscopy** /fluə'rɒnskəpi/ *noun* an examination of the body using X-rays projected onto a screen

**fluoxetine** /flu:'ɒksəti:n/ *noun* a drug that increases serotonin in the brain and is used to treat anxiety and depression

**flush** /flʌʃ/ *noun* a red colour in the skin ■ *verb* **1.** to wash a wound with liquid **2.** (of person) to turn red

**flutter** /'flʌtə, 'flʌtərɪŋ/ *noun* a rapid movement, especially of the atria of the heart, which is not controlled by impulses from the sinoatrial node

**flux** /flʌks/ *noun* an excessive production of liquid from the body

**focal** /'fəʊk(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to a focus

**focal distance** /,fəʊk(ə)l 'dɪstəns/, **focal**

**length** /'fəʊk(ə)l leŋθ/ *noun* the distance between the lens of the eye and the point behind the lens where light is focused

**focal epilepsy** /,fəʊk(ə)l 'epɪlepsi/ *noun* epilepsy arising from a localised area of the brain

**focus** /'fəʊkəs/ *noun* **1.** the point where light rays converge through a lens **2.** the centre of an

infection (NOTE: The plural is **foci**.) ■ *verb* **1.** to adjust a lens until an image is clear and sharp **2.** to see clearly ○ *He has difficulty in focusing on the object.*

**focus group** /'fəʊkəs gru:p/ *noun* a discussion group of lay people brought together under professional guidance to discuss issues such as care

**foetal** /'fi:t(ə)l/ *adjective* another spelling of **fetal** (NOTE: The spelling **foetal** is common in general use in British English, but the spelling **fetal** is the accepted international spelling for technical use.)

**foetoscope** /'fi:təskəʊp/ *noun* another spelling of **fetoscope**

**foetoscopy** /'fi:təskəpi/ *noun* another spelling of **fetoscopy**

**foetus** /'fi:təs/ *noun* another spelling of **fetus** (NOTE: The spelling **foetus** is common in general use in British English, but the spelling **fetus** is the accepted international spelling for technical use.)

**folacin** /'fəʊləsi:n/ *noun* same as **follic acid**

**follic acid** /,fəʊlɪk 'æsi:d/ *noun* a vitamin in the Vitamin B complex found in milk, liver, yeast and green vegetables such as spinach, which is essential for creating new blood cells

**follicle** /'fɒlɪk(ə)l/ *noun* a tiny hole or sac in the body

**follicle-stimulating hormone** /,fɒlɪk(ə)l ,stɪmjʊleɪtɪŋ 'hɔ:məʊn/ *noun* a hormone produced by the pituitary gland which stimulates ova in the ovaries and sperm in the testes. Abbreviation **FSH**

**follicular** /fə'ɪlkjʊlə, **folliculate** /fə'ɪlkjʊlət/ *adjective* referring to follicles

**folliculitis** /fə'ɪlkjʊ'læɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the hair follicles, especially where hair has been shaved

**fomentation** /,fəʊmənt'eɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* same as **poultice**

**fomites** /'fəʊmɪti:z/ *plural noun* objects touched by someone with a communicable disease which can then be the means of passing on the disease to others

**fontanelle** /,fɒntə'nel/ *noun* the soft cartilage between the bony sections of a baby's skull

**food allergen** /'fu:d ,ælədʒen/ *noun* a substance in food which produces an allergy

**food allergy** /'fu:d ,ælədʒɪ/ *noun* an allergy to a specific food such as nuts, which causes a severe reaction that may lead to life-threatening anaphylactic shock

**food canal** /'fu:d kə,næl/ *noun* the passage from the mouth to the rectum through which food passes and is digested

**food intolerance** /'fu:d ɪn,tɒlərəns/ *noun* an adverse reaction to some foods such as oranges, eggs, tomatoes and strawberries



**food poisoning** /'fu:d ,pɔɪz(ə)nɪŋ/ *noun* an illness caused by eating food which is contaminated with bacteria

**foot** /fʊt/ *noun* the end part of the leg on which a person stands

**foramen** /fə'reɪmən/ *noun* a natural opening inside the body, e.g. the opening in a bone through which veins or nerves pass (NOTE: The plural is **foramina**.)

**foramen magnum** /fə'reɪmən 'mæɡnəm/ *noun* the hole at the bottom of the skull where the brain is joined to the spinal cord

**foramen ovale** /fə'reɪmən əv'vɑ:lɪ/ *noun* an opening between the two parts of the heart in a fetus

COMMENT: The foramen ovale usually closes at birth, but if it stays open the blood from the veins can mix with the blood going to the arteries, causing cyanosis.

**forced expiratory volume** /,fɔ:st ek 'spɪrət(ə)rɪ ,vɒljʊ:m/ *noun* the maximum amount of air that can be expelled in a given time. Abbreviation **FEV**

**forceps** /'fɔ:sɛps/ *noun* a surgical instrument with handles like a pair of scissors, made in different sizes and with differently shaped ends, used for holding and pulling

**forceps delivery** /'fɔ:sɛps dɪ,lɪv(ə)rɪ/ *noun* childbirth where the doctor uses forceps to help the baby out of the mother's uterus

**fore-** /fɔ:/ *prefix* in front

**forearm** /'fɔ:rɑ:m/ *noun* the lower part of the arm from the elbow to the wrist

**forebrain** /'fɔ:breɪn/ *noun* the front part of the brain in an embryo

**forefinger** /'fɔ:fɪŋɡə/ *noun* the first finger on the hand, next to the thumb

**foregut** /'fɔ:gʌt/ *noun* the front part of the gut in an embryo

**foreign** /'fɔrɪn/ *adjective* 1. not belonging to your own country ○ *foreign visitors* ○ a *foreign language* 2. referring to something that is found where it does not naturally belong, especially something found in the human body that comes from a source outside the body ○ a *foreign object* ○ *foreign matter*

**foreign body** /,fɔrɪn 'bɒdɪ/ *noun* a piece of material which is not part of the surrounding tissue and should not be there, e.g. sand in a cut, dust in the eye or a pin which has been swallowed ○ *The X-ray showed the presence of a foreign body.*

**forensic** /fə'rensɪk/ *adjective* relating to the use of science in solving criminal investigations or settling legal cases

**forensic medicine** /fə'rensɪk 'med(ə)s(ə)n/ *noun* the branch of medical science concerned with finding solutions to crimes against people and which involves procedures such as conduct-

ing autopsies on murdered people or taking blood samples from clothes

**foreskin** /'fɔ:skɪn/ *noun* the skin covering the top of the penis, which can be removed by circumcision. Also called **prepuce**

**forewaters** /'fɔ:wɔ:təz/ *plural noun* fluid which comes out of the vagina at the beginning of childbirth when the amnion bursts

**formaldehyde** /fɔ:'mældɪhaɪd/ *noun* a gas with an unpleasant smell that is a strong disinfectant. When dissolved in water to make **formalin**, it is also used to preserve medical specimens.

**formalin** /'fɔ:məlɪn/ *noun* a solution of formaldehyde in water, used to preserve medical specimens

**formication** /,fɔ:mɪ'keɪf(ə)n/ *noun* an itching feeling where the skin feels as if it were covered with insects

**formula** /'fɔ:mjʊlə/ *noun* 1. a way of indicating a chemical compound using letters and numbers, e.g. H<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub> 2. instructions on how to prepare a drug

**formulary** /'fɔ:mjʊləri/ *noun* a book that lists medicines together with their formulae

**fornix** /'fɔ:nɪks/ *noun* an arch (NOTE: The plural is **fornices**.)

**fornix cerebri** /,fɔ:nɪks 'serɪbraɪ/ *noun* a section of white matter in the brain between the hippocampus and the hypothalamus. See illustration at **BRAIN** in Supplement

**foscarnet** /fɒs'kɑ:nət/ *noun* an antiviral drug administered by intravenous injection that is effective against herpesviruses that are resistant to acyclovir. It is especially used for people with AIDS.

**fossa** /'fɒsə/ *noun* a shallow hollow in a bone or the skin

**foster children** /'fɒstə ,tʃɪldrən/ *plural noun* children brought up by people who are not their own parents

**foster parent** /'fɒstə ,peərənt/ *noun* a woman or man who brings up a child born to other parents

**Fothergill's operation** /'fɒðəɡɪlz ɒpə ,reɪf(ə)n/ *noun* a surgical operation to correct prolapse of the uterus [After W. E. Fothergill (1865–1926), British gynaecologist.]

**foundation hospital** /faʊn'deɪf(ə)n ,hɒspɪt(ə)l/ *noun* in the UK, a type of hospital that is independent of its Local Health Authority in financial matters

**fourchette** /fʊə'ʃet/ *noun* a fold of skin at the back of the vulva

**fovea** /'fəʊviə/, **fovea centralis** /,fəʊviə sen 'trɑ:ɪls/ *noun* a depression in the retina which is the point where the eye sees most clearly. See illustration at **EYE** in Supplement

**FP10** /,ef pi: 'ten/ *noun* in the UK, an NHS prescription from a GP

**fracture** /'fræktʃə/ *verb* **1.** (of bone) to break ○ *The tibia fractured in two places.* **2.** to break a bone ○ *He fractured his wrist.* ■ *noun* a break in a bone ○ *rib fracture* or *fracture of a rib*

**fragile-X syndrome** /,frædʒaɪl 'eks ,sɪndrəʊm/ *noun* a hereditary condition in which part of an X chromosome is constricted, causing mental impairment

**fragilitas ossium** /frə,dʒɪlɪtəs 'ɒsiəm/ *noun* a hereditary condition where the bones are brittle and break easily, similar to osteogenesis imperfecta

**frame** /freɪm/ *noun* **1.** the particular size and shape of someone's body **2.** the main part of a building, ship or bicycle, etc., which holds it together ○ *the bicycle has a very light frame* ○ *I've broken the frame of my glasses* **3.** a solid support for something, † **walking frame**, **Zimmer frame**

**framycetin** /fræ'maɪsətɪn/ *noun* an antibiotic

**fraternal twins** /frə,tɜːn(ə)l 'tʍɪnz/ *plural noun* same as **dizygotic twins**

**freckle** /'frek(ə)l/ *noun* a harmless small brownish patch on the skin that becomes more noticeable after exposure to the sun. Freckles are often found in people with fair hair. Also called **lentigo** ■ *verb* to mark something, or become marked with freckles

**freeze** /friːz/ *verb* to anaesthetise part of the body (*informal*) ○ *They froze my big toe to remove the nail.*

**Freiberg's disease** /'fraɪbɜːgz dɪ,zɪːz/ *noun* osteochondritis of the head of the second metatarsus [Described 1914. After Albert Henry Freiberg (1869–1940), US surgeon.]

**fremitus** /'fremɪtəs/ *noun* vibrations or trembling in part of someone's body, felt by the doctor's hand or heard through a stethoscope

**frenectomy** /frə'nektəmi/ *noun* an operation to remove a frenum

**frenotomy** /frə'nɒtəmi/ *noun* an operation to split a frenum

**frenum** /'fri:nəm/, **frenulum** /'frenjʊləm/ *noun* a fold of mucous membrane under the tongue or by the clitoris

**frequency** /'fri:kwənsɪ/ *noun* **1.** the number of times something takes place in a given time ○ *the frequency of micturition* **2.** the rate of vibration in oscillations

**Freudian** /'frɔɪdiən/ *adjective* understandable in terms of Freud's theories, especially with regard to human sexuality ■ *noun* someone who is influenced by or follows Freud's theories or methods of psychoanalysis

**friable** /'fraɪəb(ə)l/ *adjective* easily broken up into small pieces

**friar's balsam** /,fraɪəz 'bɔːlsəm/ *noun* a mixture of various plant oils, including benzoin and

balsam, which can be inhaled as a vapour to relieve bronchitis or congestion

**friction** /'frɪkʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the rubbing together of two surfaces

**friction fremitus** /,frɪkʃən 'fremɪtəs/ *noun* a scratching sensation felt when the hand is placed on the chest of someone who has pericarditis

**friction murmur** /,frɪkʃən 'mɜːmə/ *noun* the sound of two serous membranes rubbing together, heard with a stethoscope in someone who has pericarditis or pleurisy

**Friedländer's bacillus** /'friːdlendəz bə ,sɪləs/ *noun* the bacterium *Klebsiella pneumoniae* which can cause pneumonia [Described 1882. After Carl Friedländer (1847–87), pathologist at the Friedrichshain Hospital, Berlin, Germany.]

**Friedman's test** /'friːdmənz test/ *noun* a test for pregnancy [After Maurice H. Friedman (1903–91), US physician.]

**Friedreich's ataxia** /,friːdraɪks ə'tæksɪə/ *noun* an inherited nervous disease which affects the spinal cord and is associated with club foot, an unsteady walk and speech difficulties. Also called **dystrophia adiposogenitalis** [Described 1863. After Nicholas Friedreich (1825–82), Professor of Pathological Anatomy at Würzburg, later Professor of Pathology and Therapy at Heidelberg, Germany.]

**frigidity** /frɪ'dʒɪdɪti/ *noun* the fact of being unable to experience orgasm, sexual pleasure or sexual desire

**fringe medicine** /'frɪnɪʒ ,med(ə)sɪn/ *noun* types of medical practice which are not usually taught in medical schools, e.g. homeopathy or acupuncture (*informal*)

**frog plaster** /'frɒg ,plɑːstə/ *noun* a plaster cast made to keep the legs in an open position after an operation to correct a dislocated hip

**Fröhlich's syndrome** /'frɔːlɪks ,sɪndrəʊm/ *noun* a condition in which someone becomes obese and the genital system does not develop, caused by an adenoma of the pituitary gland [Described 1901. After Alfred Fröhlich (1871–1953), Professor of Pharmacology at the University of Vienna, Austria.]

**frontal** /'frʌnt(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to the forehead or to the front of the head. Opposite **occipital**

**frontal bone** /'frʌnt(ə)l bəʊn/ *noun* a bone forming the front of the upper part of the skull behind the forehead

**frontal lobe** /'frʌnt(ə)l ləʊb/ *noun* the front lobe of each cerebral hemisphere

**frontal lobotomy** /,frʌnt(ə)l ləʊ'bɒtəmi/ *noun* formerly, a surgical operation on the brain to treat mental illness by removing part of the frontal lobe

**frontal sinus** /ˌfrʌnt(ə)l ˈsaɪnəs/ *noun* one of two sinuses in the front of the face above the eyes and near the nose

**front passage** /ˌfrʌnt ˈpæsɪdʒ/ (*informal*) **1.** same as **urethra** **2.** same as **vagina**

**frostbite** /ˈfrɒstbaɪt/ *noun* an injury caused by very severe cold which freezes tissue

**frozen shoulder** /ˌfrəʊz(ə)n ˈʃəʊldə/ *noun* stiffness and pain in the shoulder, caused by inflammation of the membranes of the shoulder joint after injury or a period of immobility, when deposits may form in the tendons

**frozen watchfulness** /ˌfrəʊz(ə)n ˈwɒtʃfəlnəs/ *noun* an expression of petrified fear on a child's face, especially in children who have been abused

**fructose** /ˈfrʌktʊəs/ *noun* fruit sugar found in honey and some fruit, which together with glucose forms sucrose

**frusemide** /ˈfruːsəmaɪd/ *noun* same as **furosemide**

**FSH** *abbreviation* follicle-stimulating hormone

**-fuge** /fjuːdʒ/ *suffix* driving away

**fulguration** /ˌfʌlgəˈreɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the removal of a growth such as a wart by burning with an electric needle. Also called **electrodesiccation**

**full thickness burn** /ˌfʊl ˌθɪkənəs ˈbɜːn/ *noun* same as **deep dermal burn**

**fulminant** /ˈfʊlmɪnənt/, **fulminating** /ˈfʊlmɪneɪɪŋ/ *adjective* referring to a dangerous disease which develops very rapidly

**fumigation** /ˌfjuːmɪˈgeɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the process of killing insects in an area with gas or smoke

**function** /ˈfʌŋkʃən/ *noun* the particular work done by an organ ○ *What is the function of the pancreas?* ○ *The function of an ovary is to form ova.* ■ *verb* to work in a particular way ○ *The heart and lungs were functioning normally.* ○ *His kidneys suddenly stopped functioning.*

**functional** /ˈfʌŋkʃən(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to a disorder or illness which does not have a physical cause and may have a psychological cause, as opposed to an organic disorder

**functional endoscopic sinus surgery** /ˌfʌŋkʃən(ə)l ˌendəskɒpɪk ˈsaɪnəs ˌsɜːdʒəri/ *noun* the removal of soft tissue in the sinuses using an endoscope. Abbreviation **FESS**

**functional enuresis** /ˌfʌŋkʃən(ə)l ˌenju ˈriːsɪs/ *noun* bedwetting which has a psychological cause

**functional independence measure** /ˌfʌŋkʃən(ə)l ˌɪndɪˈpendəns ˌmeʒə/ *noun* a measure of disability. Abbreviation **FIM**

**fundoplication** /ˌfʌndəʊplɪˈkeɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the process of wrapping the fundus of the stomach round the lower end of the oesophagus

**fundus** /ˈfʌndəs/ *noun* the bottom of a hollow organ such as the uterus

**fungal** /ˈfʌŋɡəl/ *adjective* relating to, or caused by, fungi ○ *a fungal skin infection*

**fungate** /ˈfʌŋɡeɪt/ *verb* (of some skin cancers) to increase rapidly at a late stage of tumour formation

**fungicide** /ˈfʌŋɡɪsaɪd/ *noun* a substance used to kill fungi

**fungiform papillae** /ˌfʌŋɡɪfɔːm pəˈpɪliː/ *noun* rounded papillae on the tip and sides of the tongue, which have taste buds

**fungoid** /ˈfʌŋɡɔɪd/ *adjective* like a fungus

**fungus** /ˈfʌŋɡəs/ *noun* an organism such as yeast or mould, some of which cause disease (NOTE: The plural is **fungi**. For other terms referring to fungi, see words beginning with **myc-**, **myco-**.)

**funiculitis** /fjuːˌnɪkjʊˈlaɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the spermatic cord

**funiculus** /fjuːˌnɪkjʊləs/ *noun* one of the three parts of the white matter in the spinal cord ○ *The three parts are called the lateral, anterior and posterior funiculus.*

**funis** /ˈfjuːnɪs/ *noun* an umbilical cord

**funnel chest** /ˌfʌn(ə)l ˈtʃest/ *noun* same as **pectus excavatum**

**funny bone** /ˈfʌni bæʊn/ *noun* same as **olecranon** (*informal*)

**furfuraceous** /ˌfɜːfjəˈreɪʃəs/ *adjective* referring to skin which is scaly

**furor** /ˈfjuːərəʊ/ *noun* an attack of wild violence, especially in someone who is mentally unwell

**furosemide** /fjuːˈrɒsəmaɪd/ *noun* a drug which causes an increase in urine production, used to relieve water retention in the body. Also called **frusemide**

**furred tongue** /ˌfɜːd ˈtʌŋ/ *noun* a condition when the papillae of the tongue are covered with a whitish coating. Also called **coated tongue**

**furuncle** /ˈfjʊərəŋkəl/ *noun* same as **boil**

**furunculosis** /fjuːəˌrʌŋkjʊˈləʊsɪs/ *noun* a condition in which several boils appear at the same time

**fusidic acid** /fjuːˌsɪdɪk ˈæsɪd/ *noun* an antibiotic used to prevent protein synthesis

**fusiform** /ˈfjuːzɪfɔːm/ *adjective* referring to muscles which are shaped like a spindle, with a wider middle section which becomes narrower at each end

**fusion** /ˈfjuːʒ(ə)n/ *noun* the act of joining, especially a surgical operation to relieve pain in the joint by joining the bones at the joint permanently so that they cannot move

**Fybogel** /ˈfaɪbɒdʒel/ a trade name for ispaghula

# G

**g** *abbreviation* gram

**GABA** /'gæbə/ *abbreviation* gamma aminobutyric acid

**gag** /gæg/ *noun* an instrument placed between the teeth to stop the mouth from closing ■ *verb* to experience a reaction similar to that of vomiting ○ *Every time the doctor tries to examine her throat, she gags.* ○ *He started gagging on the endotracheal tube.*

**gait** /geɪt/ *noun* a way of walking

**galacto-** /gələktəʊ/ *prefix* referring to milk

**galactoceles** /gə'læktəsi:l/ *noun* a breast tumour which contains milk

**galactorrhoea** /gə,læktə'rɪə/ *noun* the excessive production of milk

**galactosaemia** /gə,læktə'si:mɪə/ *noun* a congenital condition where the liver is incapable of converting galactose into glucose, with the result that a baby's development may be affected (NOTE: The treatment is to remove galactose from the diet.)

**galactose** /gə'læktəʊs/ *noun* a sugar which forms part of milk, and is converted into glucose by the liver

**galea** /'geɪliə/ *noun* any part of the body shaped like a helmet, especially the loose band of tissue in the scalp (NOTE: The plural is **galeae**.)

**gall** /gɔ:l/ *noun* same as **bile**

**gall bladder** /'gɔ:l blædə/ *noun* a sac situated underneath the liver, in which bile produced by the liver is stored. See illustration at **DIGESTIVE SYSTEM** in Supplement

**Gallie's operation** /'gæliɪz ɒpə'reɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a surgical operation where tissues from the thigh are used to hold a hernia in place [Described 1921. After William Edward Gallie (1882–1959), Professor of Surgery at the University of Toronto, Canada.]

**gallipot** /'gælipt/ *noun* a little container for ointment

**gallium** /'gæliəm/ *noun* a metallic element a radioisotope of which is used to detect tumours or other tissue disorders (NOTE: The chemical symbol is **Ga**.)

**gallop rhythm** /'gæləp,rɪð(ə)m/ *noun* the rhythm of heart sounds, three to each cycle, when someone is experiencing tachycardia

**gallstone** /'gɔ:lstəʊn/ *noun* a small stone formed from insoluble deposits from bile in the gall bladder. † **calculus**

**galvanism** /'gælvənɪz(ə)m/ *noun* a treatment using low voltage electricity

**galvanocautery** /,gælvənəʊ'kɔ:təri/ *noun* the removal of diseased tissue using an electrically heated needle or loop of wire. Also called **electrocautery**

**gamete** /'gæmi:t/ *noun* a sex cell, either a spermatozoon or an ovum

**gamete intrafallopian transfer** /,gæmi:tɪntrəfə,ləʊpiən'trænsfɜ:/ *noun* a technique to combine eggs and sperm outside the body and then insert them into the Fallopian tubes. Abbreviation **GIFT**

**gametocyte** /gə'mi:təʊsaɪt/ *noun* a cell which is developing into a gamete

**gametogenesis** /gə,mɪ:təʊ'dʒenəɪsɪs/ *noun* the process by which a gamete is formed

**gamgee tissue** /'gæmdʒi:tɪʃu:/ *noun* a surgical dressing, formed of a layer of cotton wool between two pieces of gauze

**gamma aminobutyric acid** /,gæmə ə'mi:nəʊbjʊ:tɪrɪk'æsɪd/ *noun* an amino acid neurotransmitter. Abbreviation **GABA**

**gamma camera** /'gæmə,kæm(ə)rə/ *noun* a camera for taking photographs of parts of the body into which radioactive isotopes have been introduced

**gamma globulin** /,gæmə'glɒbjʊlɪn/ *noun* a protein found in plasma, forming antibodies as protection against infection

**gamma ray** /'gæmə'reɪ/ *noun* a ray which is shorter than an X-ray and is given off by radioactive substances

**gangli-** /gæŋgli/ *prefix* referring to ganglia

**ganglion** /'gæŋgliən/ *noun* **1.** a mass of nerve cell bodies and synapses usually covered in connective tissue, found along the peripheral nerves with the exception of the basal ganglia **2.** a cyst of a tendon sheath or joint capsule, usually at the wrist, which results in a painless swelling con-

taining fluid (NOTE: [all senses] The plural is **ganglia**.)

**ganglionectomy** /,gæŋgliə'nektəmi/ *noun* the surgical removal of a ganglion

**gangrene** /'gæŋɡri:n/ *noun* a condition in which tissues die and decay, as a result of bacterial action, because the blood supply has been lost through injury or disease of the artery ○ *After she had frostbite, gangrene set in and her toes had to be amputated.*

**gangrenous** /'gæŋɡrɪnəs/ *adjective* referring to, or affected by, gangrene

**gargle** /'gɑ:g(ə)/ *noun* a mildly antiseptic solution used to clean the mouth ■ *verb* to put some antiseptic liquid solution into the back of the mouth and then breathe out air through it

**gargoylism** /'gɑ:gɔɪlɪz(ə)m/ *noun* a congenital condition of the metabolism which causes polysaccharides and fat cells to accumulate in the body, resulting in mental impairment, swollen liver and coarse features. Also called **Hurler's syndrome**

**gas** /gæs/ *noun* 1. a substance such as nitrogen, carbon dioxide or air, which is neither solid nor fluid at ordinary temperatures and can expand infinitely (NOTE: The plural **gases** is used only when referring to different types of gas.) 2. gas which accumulates in the stomach or alimentary canal and causes pain

**gas and air analgesia** /,gæs ənd 'eə rən(ə)l ,dʒɪzɪə/ *noun* a form of analgesia used when giving birth, in which a mixture of air and gas is given

**gas exchange** /'gæs ɪks,tʃeɪndʒ/ *noun* the process by which oxygen in the air is exchanged in the lungs for waste carbon dioxide carried by the blood

**gas gangrene** /,gæs 'gæŋɡri:n/ *noun* a complication of severe wounds in which the bacterium *Clostridium welchii* breeds in the wound and then spreads to healthy tissue which is rapidly decomposed with the formation of gas

**gash** /gæʃ/ *noun* a long deep cut made accidentally by something sharp ○ *She had to have three stitches in the gash in her thigh.* ■ *verb* to make a long deep cut in something accidentally ○ *She gashed her hand on the broken glass.*

**gasp** /gɑ:sp/ *noun* a short breath taken with difficulty ○ *His breath came in short gasps.* ■ *verb* to breathe with difficulty taking quick breaths ○ *She was gasping for breath.*

**gas pain** /'gæs peɪn/ *noun* a pain caused by excessive formation of gas in the stomach or intestine. † **flatus**

**gastr-** /gæstr/ *prefix* same as **gastro-** (used before vowels)

**gastrectomy** /gæ'strektəmi/ *noun* the surgical removal of the stomach

**gastric** /'gæstri:k/ *adjective* referring to the stomach

**gastric acid** /,gæstri:k 'æsid/ *noun* hydrochloric acid secreted into the stomach by acid-forming cells

**gastric flu** /,gæstri:k 'flu:/ *noun* any mild stomach disorder (*informal*)

**gastric juice** /'gæstri:k dʒu:s/ *noun* the mixture of hydrochloric acid, pepsin, intrinsic factor and mucus secreted by the cells of the lining membrane of the stomach to help the digestion of food (NOTE: Often used in the plural.)

**gastric lavage** /,gæstri:k 'lævɪdʒ/ *noun* a lavage of the stomach, usually to remove a poisonous substance which has been absorbed. Also called **stomach washout**

**gastric pit** /,gæstri:k 'pɪt/ *noun* a deep hollow in the mucous membrane forming the walls of the stomach

**gastric ulcer** /,gæstri:k 'ʌlsə/ *noun* an ulcer in the stomach. Abbreviation **GU**

**gastrin** /'gæstri:n/ *noun* a hormone which is released into the bloodstream from cells in the lower end of the stomach, stimulated by the presence of protein, and which in turn stimulates the flow of acid from the upper part of the stomach

**gastrinoma** /,gæstri:'nəʊmə/ *noun* a tumour of the islet cells, leading to excessive gastric acid

**gastritis** /gæ'straɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the stomach

**gastro-** /gæstrəʊ/ *prefix* referring to the stomach

**gastrocele** /'gæstrəʊsi:l/ *noun* a condition in which part of the stomach wall becomes weak and bulges out. Also called **stomach hernia**

**gastrocnemius** /,gæstrək'ni:mɪəs/ *noun* a large calf muscle

**gastrocolic** /,gæstrəʊ'kɒlɪk/ *adjective* referring to the stomach and colon

**gastrocolic reflex** /,gæstrəʊkɒlɪk 'rɪ:flɛks/ *noun* a sudden peristalsis of the colon produced when food is taken into an empty stomach

**gastroduodenal** /,gæstrəʊ,dju:əʊ'di:n(ə)/ *adjective* referring to the stomach and duodenum

**gastroduodenoscopy** /,gæstrəʊ,dju:əʊdɪ 'nɒskəpi/ *noun* an examination of the stomach and duodenum

**gastroduodenostomy** /,gæstrəʊ,dju:əʊdɪ 'nɒstəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to join the duodenum to the stomach so as to bypass a blockage in the pylorus

**gastroenteritis** /,gæstrəʊentə'rɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the membrane lining the intestines and the stomach, caused by a viral infection and resulting in diarrhoea and vomiting

**gastroenterology** /,gæstrəʊentə'rɒlədʒi/ *noun* the study of the digestive system and its disorders

**gastroenterostomy** /,gæstrəʊentə'rɒstəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to join the small intestine directly to the stomach so as to bypass a peptic ulcer

**gastroepiploic** /,gæstrəʊepɪ'plɔɪk/ *adjective* referring to the stomach and greater omentum

**gastroepiploic artery** /,gæstrəʊepɪ,plɔɪk 'ɑ:təri/ *noun* an artery linking the gastroduodenal artery to the splenic artery

**Gastrografin** /,gæstrəʊ'græfɪn/ a trade name for an enema used in bowel X-rays

**gastroileac reflex** /,gæstrəʊ,ɪliæk 'ri:flɛks/ *noun* automatic relaxation of the ileocaecal valve when food is present in the stomach

**gastrointestinal** /,gæstrəʊɪn'testɪn(ə)/ *adjective* referring to the stomach and intestine ○ *gastrointestinal bleeding*. Abbreviation **GI**

**gastrojejunostomy** /,gæstrəʊdʒɪdʒu:'nɒstəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to join the jejunum to the stomach

**gastrolith** /'gæstrəʊlɪθ/ *noun* a calculus in the stomach

**gastro-oesophageal reflux** /,gæstrəʊ ɪ ,sɒfədʒɪəl 'ri:flæks/, **gastro-oesophageal reflux disease** /,gæstrəʊ ɪ,sɒfədʒɪəl 'ri:flæks dɪ,zɪz/ *noun* the return of bitter-tasting, partly digested food from the stomach to the oesophagus

**gastropexy** /'gæstrəʊpeksi/ *noun* a surgical operation to attach the stomach to the wall of the abdomen

**gastroplasty** /'gæstrəʊplæsti/ *noun* surgery to correct a deformed stomach

**gastrorrhoea** /,gæstrə'rɪəl/ *noun* an excessive flow of gastric juices

**gastroschisis** /,gæstrəʊ'saɪsɪs/ *noun* a split in the wall of the abdomen, with viscera passing through it

**gastroscope** /'gæstrəskəʊp/ *noun* an instrument formed of a tube or bundle of glass fibres with a lens attached, which a doctor can pass down into the stomach through the mouth to examine the inside of the stomach

**gastroscopy** /gæ'strɒskəpi/ *noun* an examination of the stomach using a gastroscope

**gastrostomy** /gæ'strɒstəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to create an opening into the stomach from the wall of the abdomen, so that food can be introduced without passing through the mouth and throat

**gastrotomy** /gæ'strɒtəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to open up the stomach

**Gaucher's disease** /'gəʊʃeɪz dɪ,zɪz/ *noun* an enzyme disease where fatty substances accumulate in the lymph glands, spleen and liver, causing anaemia, a swollen spleen and darkening of the skin. The disease can be fatal in children. [Described 1882. After Philippe Charles Ernest Gaucher (1854–1918), French physician and dermatologist.]

**gauze** /gəʊz/ *noun* a thin light material used to make dressings

**gauze dressing** /'gəʊz ,dresɪŋ/ *noun* a dressing of thin light material

**gavage** /gæ'vɑ:ʒ/ *noun* the forced feeding of someone who cannot eat or who refuses to eat

**gay** /geɪ/ *adjective* relating to sexual activity among people of the same sex

**GDC** *abbreviation* General Dental Council

**Gehrig's disease** /'geɪrɪgz dɪ,zɪz/ *noun* same as **amyotrophic lateral sclerosis**

**Geiger counter** /'gɑ:ɡə ,kaʊntə/ *noun* an instrument for the detection and measurement of radiation [Described 1908. After Hans Geiger (1882–1945), German physicist who worked with Rutherford at Manchester University, UK]

**gel** /dʒel/ *noun* a suspension that sets into a jelly-like solid

**gelatin** /'dʒelətɪn/ *noun* a protein found in collagen which is soluble in water, used to make capsules for medicines

**gelatinous** /dʒə'lætɪnəs/ *adjective* referring to gelatin or something with a texture like jelly

**gemellus** /dʒɪ'meləs/ *noun* either of the two muscles arising from the ischium. Also called **gemellus superior muscle**, **gemellus inferior muscle**

**gender** /'dʒendə/ *noun* the fact of being of the male or female sex

**gender reassignment surgery** /,dʒendə rɪ:ə'saɪnmənt ,sɜ:dʒəri/ *noun* surgery to change someone's sex

**gender reorientation** /,dʒendə rɪ:ɔ:riən 'teɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the alteration of a person's sex through surgical and drug treatment

**gene** /dʒi:n/ *noun* a unit of DNA on a chromosome which governs the synthesis of a protein sequence and determines a particular characteristic

**general amnesia** /,dʒen(ə)rəl æm'ni:ziə/ *noun* a sudden and complete loss of memory, to the extent that a person does not even remember who he or she is

**general anaesthesia** /,dʒen(ə)rəl ,ænəs 'θi:ziəl/ *noun* loss of feeling and loss of sensation throughout the body, after being given an anaesthetic

**general anaesthetic** /,dʒen(ə)rəl ænəs 'θetɪk/ *noun* a substance given to make someone lose consciousness so that a major surgical operation can be carried out

**General Dental Council** /,dʒen(ə)rəl 'dent(ə)l ,kaʊnsəl/ *noun* in the UK, the official body that registers and supervises dentists. Abbreviation **GDC**

**general hospital** /,dʒen(ə)rəl 'hɒspɪt(ə)l/ *noun* a hospital which does not specialise in particular types of illness or particular age groups

**General Household Survey** /ˌdʒen(ə)rəl ˌhaʊshəʊld 'sɜːveɪ/ *noun* a survey of households carried out continuously by the Office for National Statistics

**generalised** /ˈdʒen(ə)rəlaɪzd/, **generalized** *adjective* 1. spreading throughout the body. Opposite **localised** 2. not having a specific cause

**generalised anxiety disorder** /ˌdʒen(ə)rəlaɪzd æŋ'zaiəti dɪsˌɔːdə/ *noun* a state of continual anxiety for which there is no specific cause

**General Medical Council** /ˌdʒen(ə)rəl 'medɪk(ə)l ˌkaʊnsəl/ *noun* in the UK, the official body that licenses qualified doctors to practise medicine. Abbreviation  **GMC**

**General Optical Council** /ˌdʒen(ə)rəl 'ɒptɪk(ə)l ˌkaʊnsəl/ *noun* in the UK, the official body that registers and supervises opticians

**general practice** /ˌdʒen(ə)rəl 'præktɪs/ *noun* a medical practice where doctors offer first-line medical care for all types of illness to people who live locally, refer them to hospital if necessary and encourage health promotion

**general practitioner** /ˌdʒen(ə)rəl præk'tɪʃ(ə)nəl/ *noun* a doctor who provides first-line medical care for all types of illness to people who live locally, refers them to hospital if necessary and encourages health promotion. Abbreviation  **GP**

**gene replacement therapy** /ˌdʒiːn rɪ'pleɪsmənt ˌθerəpi/ *noun* the replacement of missing genes or damaging gene variations in cells by the insertion of appropriate genes to treat a genetic disorder. Also called **gene therapy**

COMMENT: Gene replacement therapy has been used successfully in animals, and is in the early stages of research in humans, but may be useful in the future treatment of cystic fibrosis, thalassaemia and other genetic disorders.

**generic** /dʒə'nerɪk/ *adjective* 1. referring to medicine which does not have a special trademark or brand name given to it by its manufacturer 2. referring to a genus ○ *The generic name of this type of bacterium is Staphylococcus.*

**-genesis** /dʒenəsɪs/ *suffix* production or origin  
**gene therapy** /ˈdʒiːn ˌθerəpi/ *noun* same as **gene replacement therapy**

**genetic** /dʒə'netɪk/ *adjective* referring to genes

**genetic code** /dʒə'netɪk 'kəʊd/ *noun* the characteristics of the DNA of a cell which are passed on when the cell divides and so are inherited by a child from its parents

**genetic counselling** /dʒə'netɪk 'kaʊnsəlɪŋ/ *noun* advice and support given to people if they or their children might be affected by inherited genetic disorders

**genetic disorder** /dʒə'netɪk dɪs'ɔːdə/ *noun* a disorder or disease caused by a damaging gene variation that may be inherited

**genetic engineering** /dʒə'netɪk endʒɪ'niəɪŋ/ *noun* same as **genetic modification** (*informal*)

**genetic fingerprint** /dʒə'netɪk 'fɪŋɡəprɪnt/ *noun* the pattern of sequences of genetic material unique to an individual. Also called **DNA fingerprint**

**genetic fingerprinting** /dʒə'netɪk 'fɪŋɡə'prɪntɪŋ/ *noun* a method of revealing an individual's genetic profile, used in paternity queries and criminal investigations. Also called **DNA fingerprinting**

**geneticist** /dʒə'netɪsɪst/ *noun* a person who specialises in the study of the way in which characteristics and diseases are inherited through the genes

**genetic modification** /dʒə'netɪk ˌmɒdɪfɪ'keɪʃ(ə)n/, **genetic manipulation** /dʒə'netɪk mæ'nɪpjʊ'leɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the combination of genetic material from different sources to produce organisms with altered characteristics

**genetics** /dʒə'netɪks/ *noun* the study of genes, and of the way characteristics and diseases are inherited through the genes

**genetic screening** /dʒə'netɪk 'skriːnɪŋ/ *noun* the process of testing large numbers of people to see if anyone has a particular genetic disorder

**gene tracking** /ˈdʒiːn ˌtrækɪŋ/ *noun* the method used to trace throughout a family the inheritance of a gene such as those causing cystic fibrosis or Huntington's Chorea, in order to diagnose and predict genetic disorders

**-genic** /dʒenɪk/ *suffix* referring to a product or something which produces

**genicular** /dʒe'nikjʊlə/ *adjective* referring to the knee

**genital** /ˈdʒenɪt(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to the reproductive organs ■ *plural noun* **genitals** same as **genital organs**

**genitalia** /ˌdʒenɪ'teɪliə/ *noun* the genital organs

**genital organs** /ˌdʒenɪt(ə)l 'ɔːɡənz/ *plural noun* the external organs for reproduction, i.e. the penis and testicles in males and the vulva in females. Also called **genitals**, **genitalia**

**genital wart** /ˌdʒenɪt(ə)l 'wɔːt/ *noun* a wart in the genital or anal area, caused by a sexually transmitted virus

**genito-** /dʒenɪtəʊ/ *prefix* referring to the reproductive system

**genitourinary** /ˌdʒenɪtəʊ'jʊəriəri/ *adjective* referring to both the reproductive and urinary systems. Abbreviation  **GU**

**genitourinary system** /ˌdʒenɪtəʊ'jʊəriəri ˌsɪstəm/ *noun* the organs of reproduction and urination, including the kidneys

**genome** /'dʒi:nəʊm/ *noun* the set of all the genes of an individual

**genotype** /'dʒenətaɪp/ *noun* the genetic makeup of an individual. Compare **phenotype**

**gentamicin** /,dʒentə'maɪsɪn/ *noun* an antibiotic that is effective against a variety of different disease-causing organisms. Patients usually receive it by injection and it can cause serious side effects.

**gentian violet** /,dʒenɪən 'vaɪələt/ *noun* an antiseptic blue dye, used to paint on skin infections and also to stain specimens. Also called **crystal violet**

**genu** /'dʒenju:/ *noun* the knee

**genual** /'dʒenjuəl/ *adjective* referring to the knee

**genucubital position** /,dʒenju:'kju:bɪt(ə)l pə,zɪf(ə)n/ *noun* the position of someone resting on their knees and elbows

**genupectoral position** /,dʒenju:'pektər(ə)l pə,zɪf(ə)n/ *noun* the position of someone resting on their knees and upper chest

**genus** /'dʒi:nəs/ *noun* a category of related living organisms ○ *A genus is divided into different species.* (NOTE: The plural is **genera.**)

**genu valgum** /,dʒenju:'vælɡəm/ *noun* same as **knock-knee**

**genu varum** /,dʒenju:'veərəm/ *noun* same as **bow legs**

**geri-** /dʒeri/ *prefix* referring to old age

**geriatric** /,dʒeri:'ætrɪk/ *adjective* **1.** referring to old people **2.** specialising in the treatment of old people ○ *geriatric unit*

**geriatrician** /,dʒeriə'trɪf(ə)n/ *noun* a doctor who specialises in the treatment or study of diseases of old people

**geriatrics** /,dʒeri:'ætrɪks/ *noun* the study of the diseases and disorders of old people. Compare **paediatrics**

**germ** /dʒɜ:m/ *noun* **1.** a microorganism which causes a disease, e.g. a virus or bacterium (*informal*) ○ *Germs are not visible to the naked eye.* **2.** a part of an organism capable of developing into a new organism

**German measles** /,dʒɜ:mən 'mi:z(ə)lz/ *noun* same as **rubella**

**germ cell** /'dʒɜ:m sel/ *noun* a cell which is capable of developing into a spermatozoon or ovum. Also called **gonocyte**

**germinal epithelium** /,dʒɜ:mɪn(ə)l 'epɪ 'θi:liəm/ *noun* the outer layer of the ovary

**germ layer** /'dʒɜ:m ,leɪ/ *noun* one of two or three layers of cells in animal embryos which form the organs of the body

**gerontologist** /,dʒerən'tɒlədʒɪst/ *noun* a specialist in gerontology

**gerontology** /,dʒerən'tɒlədʒi/ *noun* the study of the process of ageing and the diseases of old people

**Gesell's developmental chart** /gə,zels dɪ ,veləp'ment(ə)l tʃɑ:t/ *noun* a chart showing the development of motor reactions and growth patterns in children

**gestation** /dʒe'steɪf(ə)n/ *noun* **1.** the process of development of a baby from conception to birth in the mother's womb **2.** same as **gestation period**

**gestational age** /dʒe'steɪf(ə)n(ə)l 'eɪdʒ/ *noun* the age of a fetus, calculated from the mother's last period to the date of birth

**gestational diabetes** /dʒe'steɪf(ə)n(ə)l ,daɪə'bi:tɪ:z/ *noun* a form of diabetes mellitus which develops in a pregnant woman

**gestation period** /dʒe'steɪf(ə)n ,pɪəriəd/ *noun* the period, usually of 266 days, from conception to birth, during which the baby develops in the mother's womb. Also called **pregnancy**

**gestodene** /'dʒestədi:n/ *noun* an oral contraceptive

**get better** /,get 'betə/ *verb* **1.** to become healthy again after being ill ○ *He was seriously ill, but seems to be getting better.* **2.** (of an illness) to stop or become less severe ○ *Her cold has got better.*

**getting on** /,getɪŋ 'ɒn/ *adjective* becoming elderly ○ *Her parents are getting on.*

**GFR** *abbreviation* glomerular filtration rate

**GH** *abbreviation* growth hormone

**Ghon's focus** /,ɡɒnz 'fəʊkəs/ *noun* a spot on the lung produced by the tuberculosis bacillus [Described 1912. After Anton Ghon (1866–1936), Professor of Pathological Anatomy at Prague, Czech Republic.]

**GI** *abbreviation* gastrointestinal

**Giardia** /dʒi:'ɑ:diə/ *noun* a microscopic protozoan parasite which causes giardiasis

**giardiasis** /,dʒi:ə'taɪəsɪs/ *noun* a disorder of the intestine caused by the parasite *Giardia lamblia*, usually with no symptoms, but in heavy infections the absorption of fat may be affected, causing diarrhoea. Also called **lamblia**

**giddiness** /'ɡɪdnəs/ *noun* a condition in which someone has difficulty in standing up and keeping their balance because of a feeling that everything is turning around ○ *He began to experience attacks of giddiness.*

**GIFT** /ɡɪft/ *noun* a procedure in which a surgeon removes eggs from a woman's ovary, mixes them with sperm and places them in one of her Fallopian tubes to help her conceive a child. Full form **gamete intrafallopian transfer**

**gigantism** /dʒaɪ'ɡæntɪz(ə)m/ *noun* a condition in which someone grows very tall, caused by excessive production of growth hormone by the pituitary gland



**Gilbert's syndrome** /ˈɡɪlbəts ˌsɪndrəʊm/ *noun* an inherited disorder where the liver does not deal with bilirubin correctly

**Gilliam's operation** /ˈɡɪliəmz ɒpəˌreɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a surgical operation to correct retroversion of the uterus [After David Tod Gilliam (1844–1923), physician, Columbus, Ohio, USA.]

**gingiv-** /dʒɪŋdʒɪv/ *prefix* referring to the gums

**gingiva** /dʒɪŋˈdʒaɪvə/ *noun* same as **gum** (NOTE: The plural is **gingivae**.)

**gingival** /ˈdʒɪŋdʒɪv(ə)/ *adjective* relating to the gums

**gingivectomy** /ˌdʒɪŋdʒɪˈvektəmi/ *noun* the surgical removal of excess gum tissue

**gingivitis** /ˌdʒɪŋdʒɪˈvaɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the gums as a result of bacterial infection

**ginglymus** /ˈdʒɪŋɡlɪməs/ *noun* a joint which allows movement in two directions only, e.g. the knee or elbow. Also called **hinge joint**. Compare **ball and socket joint**

**ginseng** /ˈdʒɪnsɛŋɡ/ *noun* a plant root widely used as a tonic and a traditional Chinese herbal remedy

**girdle** /ˈɡɜːd(ə)/ *noun* a set of bones making a ring or arch

**Girdlestone's operation** /ˈɡɜːd(ə)stəʊnz ɒpəˌreɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a surgical operation to relieve osteoarthritis of the hip [After Gathorne Robert Girdlestone (1881–1950), Nuffield Professor of Orthopaedics at Oxford, UK]

**glabella** /ɡləˈbelə/ *noun* a flat area of bone in the forehead between the eyebrows

**gladiolus** /ˌɡlædɪˈəʊləs/ *noun* the middle section of the sternum

**gland** /ɡlænd/ *noun* an organ in the body containing cells that secrete substances such as hormones, sweat or saliva which act elsewhere

**glanders** /ˈɡlændəz/ *noun* a bacterial disease of horses, which can be caught by humans, with symptoms of high fever and inflammation of the lymph nodes

**glandular** /ˈɡlændjʊlə/ *adjective* referring to glands

**glandular fever** /ˌɡlændjʊlə ˈfiːvə/ *noun* same as **infectious mononucleosis**

**glans** /ɡlænz/ *noun* a rounded part at the end of the penis or clitoris. See illustration at **UROGENITAL SYSTEM (MALE)** in Supplement

**glare** /ɡleə/ *noun* **1.** a long stare that expresses a negative emotion such as anger **2.** an uncomfortably or dazzlingly bright light **3.** scattered bright light when examining something with a microscope ■ *verb* **1.** to stare angrily **2.** to shine uncomfortably brightly **3.** to be very obvious or conspicuous

**Glasgow coma scale** /ˌɡlɑːsgəʊ ˈkəʊmə ˌskeɪl/, **Glasgow scoring system** /ˌɡlɑːsgəʊ

ˈskɔːrɪŋ ˌsɪstəm/ *noun* a seven-point scale for evaluating someone's level of consciousness

**glass eye** /ˌɡlɑːs ˈaɪ/ *noun* an artificial eye made of glass

**glaucoma** /ɡləʊˈkəʊmə/ *noun* a condition of the eyes, caused by unusually high pressure of fluid inside the eyeball, resulting in disturbances of vision and blindness

**gleet** /ɡliːt/ *noun* a thin discharge from the vagina, penis, a wound or an ulcer

**glenohumeral** /ˌɡliːnəʊˈhʊːməərə/ *adjective* referring to both the glenoid cavity and the humerus

**glenohumeral joint** /ˌɡliːnəʊˈhʊːməərə dʒɔɪnt/ *noun* the shoulder joint

**glenoid** /ˈɡliːnɔɪd/ *adjective* shaped like a small shallow cup or socket

**glenoid cavity** /ˌɡliːnɔɪd ˈkævɪti/, **glenoid fossa** /ˌɡliːnɔɪd ˈfɒsə/ *noun* a socket in the shoulder joint into which the head of the humerus fits

**glia** /ˈɡliːə/ *noun* connective tissue of the central nervous system, surrounding cell bodies, axons and dendrites. Also called **neuroglia**

**glial cell** /ˈɡliːəl sel/ *noun* a cell in the glia

**glial tissue** /ˌɡliːəl ˈtɪʃuː/ *noun* same as **glia**

**glibenclamide** /ɡlɪˈbeŋkləmaɪd/ *noun* a sulphonylurea drug used to treat Type II diabetes mellitus

**gliclazide** /ˈɡlɪkləzɪd/ *noun* an antibacterial drug used to treat Type II diabetes mellitus

**glio-** /ɡlaɪəʊ/ *prefix* referring to brain tissue

**glioma** /ɡlaɪˈəʊmə/ *noun* any tumour of the glial tissue in the brain or spinal cord

**gliomyoma** /ˌɡlaɪəʊməˈəʊmə/ *noun* a tumour of both the nerve and muscle tissue

**glipizide** /ˈɡlɪpɪzɪd/ *noun* a drug used to reduce the glucose level in the blood

**Glisson's capsule** /ˌɡlɪs(ə)nz ˈkæpsjuːl/ *noun* a tissue sheath in the liver containing the blood vessels [After Francis Glisson (1597–1677), philosopher, physician and anatomist at Cambridge and London, UK]

**globin** /ˈɡləʊbɪn/ *noun* a protein which combines with other substances to form compounds such as haemoglobin and myoglobin

**globule** /ˈɡləʊbjʊːl/ *noun* a round drop, especially of fat

**globulin** /ˈɡləʊbjʊlɪn/ *noun* a protein, present in blood, belonging to a group that includes antibodies

**globus** /ˈɡləʊbəs/ *noun* any ball-shaped part of the body

**globus hystericus** /ˌɡləʊbəs ɦɪˈstɛrɪkəs/ *noun* a feeling of not being able to swallow, caused by worry or embarrassment

**glomerular** /ɡləˈmerjʊlə/ *adjective* referring to a glomerulus

**glomerular capsule** /glɒ,merʊlə 'kæpsju:l/ *noun* same as **Bowman's capsule**

**glomerular filtration rate** /glɒ,merʊlə fɪl 'treɪf(ə)n ,reit/ *noun* the rate at which the kidneys filter blood and remove waste matter

**glomerular tuft** /glɒ,merʊlə 'tʌft/ *noun* a group of blood vessels in the kidney which filter the blood

**glomeruli** plural of **glomerulus**

**glomerulitis** /glɒ,merʊ'laitɪs/ *noun* inflammation causing lesions of glomeruli in the kidney

**glomerulonephritis** /glɒ,merʊləneɪ'fraɪtɪs/ *noun* same as **Bright's disease**

**glomerulus** /glɒ'merʊləs/ *noun* a group of blood vessels which filter waste matter from the blood in a kidney (NOTE: The plural is **glomeruli**.)

**gloss-** /glɒs/ *prefix* same as **glosso-** (used before vowels)

**glossa** /'glɒsə/ *noun* same as **tongue**

**glossal** /'glɒs(ə)/ *adjective* relating to the tongue

**glossectomy** /glɒ'sektəmi/ *noun* the surgical removal of the tongue

**glossitis** /glɒ'saɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the surface of the tongue

**glosso-** /glɒsəʊ/ *prefix* referring to the tongue

**glossodynia** /,glɒsəʊ'dɪniə/ *noun* pain in the tongue

**glossopharyngeal** /,glɒsəʊ'færɪn'dʒi:əl/ *adjective* relating to the tongue and pharynx

**glossopharyngeal nerve** /,glɒsəʊ'færɪn'dʒi:əl nɜ:v/ *noun* the ninth cranial nerve which controls the pharynx, the salivary glands and part of the tongue

**glossoplegia** /,glɒsəʊ'pli:dʒə/ *noun* paralysis of the tongue

**glossotomy** /glɒ'sɒtəmi/ *noun* a surgical incision into the tongue

**glottis** /'glɒtɪs/ *noun* an opening in the larynx between the vocal cords, which forms the entrance to the main airway from the pharynx

**gluc-** /glu:k/ *prefix* referring to glucose

**glucagon** /'glu:kəɡɒn/ *noun* a hormone secreted by the islets of Langerhans in the pancreas, which increases the level of blood sugar by stimulating the breakdown of glycogen

**glucagonoma** /,glu:kəɡɒ'nəʊmə/ *noun* a tumour of the cells of the pancreas that produces glucagon

**glucocorticoid** /,glu:kəʊ'kɔ:tɪkɔɪd/ *noun* any corticosteroid which breaks down carbohydrates and fats for use by the body, produced by the adrenal cortex

**gluconeogenesis** /,glu:kəʊ,ni:əʊ'dʒenəɪsɪs/ *noun* the production of glucose in the liver from protein or fat reserves

**glucose** /'glu:kəʊz/ *noun* a simple sugar found in some fruit, but also broken down from white sugar or carbohydrate and absorbed into the body or secreted by the kidneys. Also called **dextrose**

**glucose tolerance test** /'glu:kəʊz ,tɒlərəns test/ *noun* a test for diabetes mellitus, in which someone eats glucose and his or her urine and blood are tested at regular intervals. Abbreviation **GTT**

**glue ear** /'glu: ɪə/ *noun* a condition in which fluid forms behind the eardrum and causes deafness. Also called **secretory otitis media**

**glue-sniffing** /'glu: ,snɪfɪŋ/ *noun* ▶ **solvent abuse**

**glutamic oxaloacetic transaminase** /glu: ,tæmɪk ɒksələʊə,sɪtɪk træn'sæmɪneɪz/ *noun* an enzyme used to test for viral hepatitis

**glutamic pyruvic transaminase** /glu: ,tæmɪk paɪ,rʊvɪk træn'sæmɪneɪz/ *noun* an enzyme produced in the liver and released into the blood if the liver is damaged

**gluteal** /'glu:tiəl/ *adjective* referring to the buttocks

**gluteal artery** /'glu:tiəl ,ɑ:təri/ *noun* one of the two arteries supplying the buttocks, the **inferior gluteal artery** or the **superior gluteal artery**

**gluteal muscle** /'glu:tiəl ,mʌs(ə)/ *noun* a muscle in the buttock. † **gluteus**

**gluteal vein** /'glu:tiəl veɪn/ *noun* one of two veins draining the buttocks, the **inferior gluteal vein** and the **superior gluteal vein**

**gluten** /'glu:t(ə)n/ *noun* a protein found in some cereals, which makes the grains form a sticky paste when water is added

**gluten enteropathy** /,glu:t(ə)n ,entə'rɒpəθi/ same as **gluten-induced enteropathy**

**gluten-induced enteropathy** /,glu:t(ə)n ɪn ,dʒu:st ,entə'rɒpəθi/ *noun* **1.** an allergic disease mainly affecting children, in which the lining of the intestine is sensitive to gluten, preventing the small intestine from digesting fat **2.** a condition in adults where the villi in the intestine become smaller and so reduce the surface which can absorb nutrients (NOTE: Symptoms include a swollen abdomen, pale diarrhoea, abdominal pains and anaemia.) ▶ also called **coeliac disease**

**gluteus** /'glu:tiəs/ *noun* one of three muscles in the buttocks, responsible for movements of the hip. The largest is the **gluteus maximus**, while the **gluteus medius** and **gluteus minimus** are smaller.

**glyc-** /glɑɪk/ *prefix* same as **glyco-** (used before vowels)

**glycaemia** /glɑr'si:mɪə/ *noun* the level of glucose found in the blood. † **hypoglycaemia**, **hyperglycaemia**

**glycerin** /'glɪsərɪn/, **glycerine**, **glycerol** /'glɪsərɒl/ *noun* a colourless viscous sweet-tasting liquid present in all fats (NOTE: Synthetic glycerin is used in various medicinal preparations and also as a lubricant in items such as toothpaste and cough medicines.)

**glyco-** /glɪkəʊ/ *prefix* referring to sugar

**glycogen** /'glɪkədʒən/ *noun* a type of starch, converted from glucose by the action of insulin, and stored in the liver as a source of energy

**glycogenesis** /,glɪkəʊs'dʒenəsɪs/ *noun* the process by which glucose is converted into glycogen in the liver

**glycogenolysis** /,glɪkəʊdʒə'nɒləsɪs/ *noun* the process by which glycogen is broken down to form glucose

**glycolysis** /glɪk'kɒləsɪs/ *noun* the metabolic breakdown of glucose to release energy

**glycoside** /'glɪkəʊsaɪd/ *noun* a chemical compound of a type which is formed from a simple sugar and another compound (NOTE: Many of the drugs produced from plants are glycosides.)

**glycosuria** /,glɪkəʊ'sjʊəriə/ *noun* a high level of sugar in the urine, a symptom of diabetes mellitus

**GMC** *abbreviation* General Medical Council

**gnathic** /'næθɪk/ *adjective* referring to the jaw

**gnathoplasty** /'næθəʊ,plæsti/ *noun* surgery on the jaw

**gnawing** /'nɔ:ɪŋ/ *adjective* referring to a physical or emotional feeling that is persistent and uncomfortable ○ a *gnawing pain* ○ *gnawing anxiety*

**goblet cell** /'gɒblət sel/ *noun* a tube-shaped cell in the epithelium which secretes mucus

**GOC** *abbreviation* General Optical Council

**goitre** /'gɔɪtə/ *noun* an excessive enlargement of the thyroid gland, seen as a swelling round the neck, caused by a lack of iodine (NOTE: The US spelling is **goiter**.)

**gold** /gəʊld/ *noun* a soft yellow-coloured precious metal, used as a compound in various drugs, and sometimes as a filling for teeth (NOTE: The chemical symbol is **Au**.)

**golden hour** /,gəʊld(ə)n 'aʊə/ *noun* the first hour after a serious injury when the most difference can be made to the patient's health

**golfer's elbow** /,gɒlfəz 'elbəʊ/ *noun* inflammation of the tendons of the elbow

**Golgi apparatus** /'gɒldʒɪ æpə'reɪtəs/ *noun* a folded membranous structure inside the cell cytoplasm which stores and transports enzymes and hormones [Described 1898. After Camillo Golgi (1843–1926), Professor of Histology and later Rector of the University of Pavia, Italy. In 1906 he shared the Nobel Prize with Santiago Ramón y Cajal for work on the nervous system.]

**Golgi cell** /'gɒldʒɪ ,sel/ *noun* a type of nerve cell in the central nervous system, either with long axons (Golgi Type 1) or without axons (Golgi Type 2)

**gomphosis** /gɒm'fəʊsɪs/ *noun* a joint which cannot move, like that between a tooth and the jaw

**gonad** /'gəʊnæd/ *noun* a sex gland which produces gametes and also sex hormones, e.g. a testicle in males or an ovary in females

**gonadotrophic hormone** /,gəʊnədəʊ ,trɒfɪk 'hɔ:məʊn/ *noun* one of two hormones, the follicle-stimulating hormone and the luteinising hormone, produced by the anterior pituitary gland which have an effect on the ovaries in females and on the testes in males

**gonadotrophin** /,gəʊnədəʊ'trɒfɪn/ *noun* any of a group of hormones produced by the pituitary gland which stimulates the sex glands at puberty. † **human chorionic gonadotrophin**

**goni-** /gəʊni/ *prefix* same as **gonio-** (used before a vowel)

**gonio-** /gəʊniəʊ/ *prefix* referring to an angle

**gonion** /'gəʊniən/ *noun* the outer point at which the lower jawbone angles upwards

**goniopuncture** /'gəʊniəʊ,pʌŋktʃə/ *noun* a surgical operation for draining fluid from the eyes of someone who has glaucoma

**goniotomy** /,gəʊni'ɒtəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to treat glaucoma by cutting Schlemm's canal

**gonococcal** /,gɒnə'kɒk(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to gonococcus

**gonococcus** /,gɒnə'kɒkəs/ *noun* a type of bacterium, *Neisseria gonorrhoea*, which causes gonorrhoea (NOTE: The plural is **gonococci**.)

**gonocyte** /'gɒnəsait/ *noun* same as **germ cell**

**gonorrhoea** /,gɒnə'ri:ə/ *noun* a sexually transmitted disease which produces painful irritation of the mucous membrane and a watery discharge from the vagina or penis

**goose bumps** /'gu:s bʌmps/, **goose flesh** /'gu:s fleʃ/, **goose pimples** /'gu:s ,pɪmp(ə)lz/ *noun* a reaction of the skin when someone is cold or frightened, the skin being raised into many little bumps by the action of the arrector pili muscles. Also called **cutis anserina**

**gorget** /'gɔ:dʒɪt/ *noun* a surgical instrument used to remove stones from the bladder

**gouge** /gəʊdʒ/ *noun* a surgical instrument like a chisel, used to cut bone

**gout** /gəʊt/ *noun* a disease in which unusual quantities of uric acid are produced and form crystals in the cartilage round joints. Also called **podagra**

**GP** *abbreviation* general practitioner

**GP co-op** /ˌdʒi: 'pi: kəʊ ˌɒp/ *noun* a group of GPs who work together to provide out-of-hours care without making any profit

**graft** /grɑ:ft/ *noun* the act of transplanting an organ or tissue to replace one which is not functioning or which is diseased ○ *a skin graft* ■ *verb* to take a healthy organ or tissue and transplant it in place of diseased or malfunctioning organ or tissue ○ *The surgeons grafted a new section of bone at the side of the skull.* † **autograft, homograft**

**graft versus host disease** /ˌgrɑ:ft ˌvɜ:səs 'həʊst dɪˌzi:z/ *noun* a condition which develops when cells from the grafted tissue react against the person's own tissue, causing skin disorders. Abbreviation **GVHD**

**grain** /greɪn/ *noun* 1. a very small piece of something hard such as salt 2. a measure of weight equal to 0.0648 grams. Symbol **gr**

**-gram** /græm/ *suffix* a record in the form of a picture

**Gram-negative bacterium** /ˌgræm 'negətɪv bæktɪəriəm/ *noun* a bacterium which takes up the red counterstain, after the alcohol has washed out the first violet dye

**Gram-positive bacterium** /ˌgræm 'pɒzɪtɪv bæktɪəriəm/ *noun* a bacterium which retains violet dye and appears blue-black when viewed under the microscope

**Gram's stain** /'græmz steɪn/ *noun* a method of staining bacteria so that they can be identified [Described 1884. After Hans Christian Joachim Gram (1853–1938), Professor of Medicine in Copenhagen, Denmark. He discovered the stain by accident as a student in Berlin, Germany.]

**grand mal** /ˌgrɒn 'mæl/ *noun* a type of epilepsy, in which someone becomes unconscious and falls down, while the muscles become stiff and twitch violently

**grand multiparity** /ˌgræn mʌltɪ'pærɪti/ *noun* the fact of having given birth to more than four children

**granular** /'grænjʊlə/ *adjective* made up of granules

**granular cast** /ˌgrænjʊlə 'kɑ:st/ *noun* a cast composed of cells filled with protein and fatty granules

**granular leucocyte** /ˌgrænjʊlə 'lu:kəsət/ *noun* same as **granulocyte**

**granulation** /ˌgrænjʊ'leɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the formation of rough red tissue on the surface of a wound or site of infection, the first stage in the healing process

**granulation tissue** /ˌgrænjʊ'leɪʃ(ə)n ˌtɪʃu:/ *noun* soft tissue, consisting mainly of tiny blood vessels and fibres, which forms over a wound

**granule** /'grænjʊ:l/ *noun* a very small piece of something hard

**granulocyte** /'grænjʊləsaɪt/ *noun* a type of leucocyte or white blood cell which contains granules, e.g. a basophil, eosinophil or neutrophil

**granulocytopenia** /ˌgrænjʊləˌsaɪəʊ 'pi:niə/ *noun* a usually fatal disease caused by the lowering of the number of granulocytes in the blood due to bone marrow malfunction

**granuloma** /ˌgrænjʊ'ləʊmə/ *noun* a mass of granulation tissue which forms at the site of bacterial infections (NOTE: The plural is **granulomata** or **granulomas**.)

**granulomatosis** /ˌgrænjʊləʊmə'təʊsɪs/ *noun* persistent inflammation leading to the formation of nodules

**graph** /grɑ:f/ *noun* a diagram which shows the relationship between quantities as a line

**graph-** /græf/ *prefix* writing

**-graph** /grɑ:f/ *suffix* a machine which records something as pictures

**-grapher** /græfə/ *suffix* a technician who operates a machine which records

**-graphy** /græfi/ *suffix* the technique of study through pictures

**grattage** /græ'tɑ:ʒ/ *noun* a procedure that involves scraping the surface of an ulcer which is healing slowly to make it heal more rapidly

**gravel** /'græv(ə)/ *noun* small stones which pass from the kidney to the urinary system, causing pain in the ureter

**Graves' disease** /'grævɪz dɪˌzi:z/ *noun* same as **exophthalmic goitre** [Described 1835. After Robert James Graves (1796–1853), Irish physician at the Meath Hospital, Dublin, Ireland, where he was responsible for introducing clinical ward work for medical students.]

**gravid** /'grævɪd/ *adjective* pregnant

**gravidæ multiparæ** /ˌgrævɪdi:z ˌmʌltɪ 'pɑ:ri:/ *plural noun* women who have given birth to at least four live babies

**gravity** /'grævɪti/ *noun* the importance or potential danger of a disease or situation

**Grawitz tumour** /'grɑ:vɪts ˌtju:mə/ *noun* a malignant tumour in kidney cells [Described 1883. After Paul Albert Grawitz (1850–1932), Professor of Pathology at Greifswald, Germany.]

**gray** /greɪ/ *noun* an SI unit of measurement of absorbed radiation equal to 100 rads. Symbol **Gy**. † **rd**

**graze** /greɪz/ *noun* a scrape on the skin surface, making some blood flow ■ *verb* to scrape the skin surface accidentally

**greater curvature** /ˌgreɪtə 'kɜ:vətʃə/ *noun* a convex line of the stomach

**greater vestibular glands** /ˌgreɪtə ve 'stɪbjʊlə glændz/ *noun* same as **Bartholin's glands**

**great toe** /'greɪt təʊ/ *noun* same as **big toe**

**greenstick fracture** /'grɪn:stɪk ,fræktʃə/ *noun* a type of fracture occurring in children, where a long bone bends, but is not completely broken

**grey commissure** /,greɪ 'kɒmɪsjə/ *noun* part of the grey matter nearest to the central canal of the spinal cord, where axons cross over each other

**grey matter** /'greɪ ,mætə/ *noun* nerve tissue which is of a dark grey colour and forms part of the central nervous system

COMMENT: In the brain, grey matter encloses the white matter, but in the spinal cord, white matter encloses the grey matter.

**grief counsellor** /'grɪf ,kaʊns(ə)lə/ *noun* a person who helps someone to cope with the feelings they have when someone such as a close relative dies

**gripe water** /'graɪp ,wɔ:tə/ *noun* a solution of glucose and alcohol, used to relieve abdominal pains in babies

**groin** /grɔɪn/ *noun* a junction at each side of the body where the lower abdomen joins the top of the thighs ○ *He had a dull pain in his groin.* (NOTE: For other terms referring to the groin, see **inguinal**.)

**grommet** /'grɒmɪt/ *noun* a tube which can be passed from the external auditory meatus into the middle ear, usually to allow fluid to drain off, as in someone who has glue ear

**ground substance** /,graʊnd 'sʌbstəns/ *noun* same as **matrix**

**group** /gru:p/ *noun* several people, animals or things which are all close together ○ *A group of patients were waiting in the surgery.* ■ *verb* to bring things or people together in a group, or come together in a group ○ *The drugs are grouped under the heading 'antibiotics'.*

**group practice** /,gru:p 'præktɪs/ *noun* a medical practice where several doctors or dentists share the same office building and support services

**group therapy** /,gru:p 'θerəpi/ *noun* a type of psychotherapy where a group of people with the same disorder meet together with a therapist to discuss their condition and try to help each other

**growing pains** /'grəʊɪŋ peɪnz/ *plural noun* pains associated with adolescence, which can be a form of rheumatic fever

**growth** /grəʊθ/ *noun* **1.** the process of increasing in size ○ *the growth in the population since 1960* ○ *The disease stunts children's growth.* **2.** a cyst or tumour ○ *The doctor found a cancerous growth on the left breast.* ○ *He had an operation to remove a small growth from his chin.*

**growth factor** /'grəʊθ ,fæktə/ *noun* a chemical, especially a polypeptide, produced in the

body which encourages particular cells to grow ○ *a nerve growth factor*

**growth hormone** /'grəʊθ ,hɔ:məʊn/ *noun* a hormone secreted by the pituitary gland during deep sleep, which stimulates growth of the long bones and protein synthesis. Also called **somatropin**

**grumbling appendix** /,grʌmblɪŋ ə'pendɪks/ *noun* a vermiform appendix that is always slightly inflamed (*informal*) † **chronic appendicitis**

**GU** *abbreviation* **1.** gastric ulcer **2.** genitourinary

**guanine** /'gwa:nɪn/ *noun* one of the four basic chemicals in DNA

**guardian ad litem** /,gɑ:dɪən æd 'lɪ:təm/ *noun* a person who acts on behalf of a minor who is a defendant in a court case

**guardian Caldicott** /,gɑ:dɪən 'kɔ:ldɪkɒt/ *noun* in the UK, a person appointed by a hospital or Health Trust to make sure that information about patients is kept confidential, following the Caldicott Report of 1997

**Guillain-Barré syndrome** /,gi:jæn 'bæreɪ ,sɪndrəʊm/ *noun* a nervous disorder in which, after a non-specific infection, demyelination of the spinal roots and peripheral nerves takes place, leading to generalised weakness and sometimes respiratory paralysis. Also called **Landry's paralysis** [Described 1916. After Georges Guillain (1876–1961), Professor of Neurology in Paris, France, Jean Alexandre Barré (1880–1967), Professor of Neurology in Strasbourg, France.]

**guillotine** /'gɪləti:n/ *noun* a surgical instrument for cutting out tonsils

**guinea worm** /'gɪni wɜ:m/ *noun* same as **Dra-cunculus**

**Gulf War syndrome** /,gʌlf 'wɔ: ,sɪndrəʊm/ *noun* a collection of unexplained symptoms, including fatigue, skin disorders, and muscle pains, affecting some soldiers who fought in the Gulf War in 1991

**gullet** /'gʌlɪt/ *noun* same as **oesophagus**

**gum** /gʌm/ *noun* the soft tissue covering the part of the jaw which surrounds the teeth ○ *Her gums are red and inflamed.* ○ *A build-up of tartar can lead to gum disease.* Also called **gingiva** (NOTE: For other terms referring to the gums, see words beginning with **gingiv-**.)

**gumboil** /'gʌmbɔɪl/ *noun* an abscess on the gum near a tooth

**gustation** /gʌ'steɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the act of tasting

**gustatory** /'gʌstət(ə)rɪ/ *adjective* referring to the sense of taste

**gut** /gʌt/ *noun* **1.** the tubular organ for the digestion and absorption of food. Also called **intestine** **2.** a type of thread, made from the intestines of sheep. It is used to sew up internal incisions and

dissolves slowly so does not need to be removed.

ϕ **catgut**

**Guthrie test** /'gʌθri test/ *noun* a test used on babies to detect the presence of phenylketonuria [After R. Guthrie (1916–95), US paediatrician.]

**gutta** /'gʌtə/ *noun* a drop of liquid, as used in treatment of the eyes (NOTE: The plural is **guttae**.)

**gutter splint** /'gʌtə splɪnt/ *noun* a shaped container in which a broken limb can rest without being completely surrounded

**GVHD** *abbreviation* graft versus host disease

**gyn-** /gaɪn/ *prefix* same as **gynae-** (*used before a vowel*)

**gynae-** referring to women

**gynaecological** /,ɪgaɪnɪkə'lɒdʒɪk(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to the treatment of diseases of women

**gynaecologist** /,gaɪnɪ'kɒlədʒɪst/ *noun* a doctor who specialises in the treatment of diseases of women

**gynaecology** /,ɪgaɪnɪ'kɒlədʒi/ *noun* the study of female sex organs and the treatment of diseases of women in general

**gynaecomastia** /,ɪgaɪnɪkə'mæstiə/ *noun* the unusual development of breasts in a male

**gyne** /'gaɪni/ same as **gynaecology**, **gynaecological** (*informal*) ○ a *gyne appointment*

**gypsum** /'dʒɪpsəm/ *noun* calcium sulphate, used as plaster of Paris

**gyrus** /'dʒaɪərəs/ *noun* a raised part of the cerebral cortex between the sulci

# H

**H2-receptor antagonist** /,eɪtʃ tu: rɪ'septəʊ æn,tæɡə'nɪst/ *noun* a drug that inhibits the production of stomach acid and so relieves indigestion and gastric ulcers

**habit** /'hæbɪt/ *noun* **1.** an action which is an automatic response to a stimulus **2.** a regular way of doing something ○ *He got into the habit of swimming every day before breakfast.* ○ *She's got out of the habit of taking any exercise.*

**habit-forming drug** /'hæbɪt ,fɔ:mɪŋ drʌɡ/ *noun* a drug which is addictive

**habitual abortion** /hə,bɪtʃuəl ə'bɔ:ʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a condition in which a woman has abortions with successive pregnancies

**habituation** /hə,bɪtʃu'eɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the fact of being psychologically but not physically addicted to or dependent on a drug, alcohol or other substance

**habitus** /'hæbɪtəs/ *noun* the general physical appearance of a person, including build and posture

**haem** /hi:m/ *noun* a molecule containing iron which binds proteins to form haemoproteins such as haemoglobin and myoglobin

**haem-** /hi:m/ *prefix* same as **haemo-** (used before vowels)

**haemagglutination** /,hi:mæɡlu:tɪ'neɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the clumping of red blood cells, often used to test for the presence of antibodies

**haemangioma** /,hi:mændʒɪ'əʊmə/ *noun* a harmless tumour which forms in blood vessels and appears on the skin as a birthmark

**haemarthrosis** /,hi:mɑ:'θrəʊsɪs/ *noun* pain and swelling caused by blood leaking into a joint

**haematemesis** /,hi:mə'teməsɪs/ *noun* a condition in which someone vomits blood, usually because of internal bleeding

**haematic** /hi:'mætɪk/ *adjective* referring to blood

**haematin** /'hi:mətɪn/ *noun* a substance which forms from haemoglobin when bleeding takes place

**haematinic** /,hi:mə'tɪnɪk/ *noun* a drug which increases haemoglobin in blood, used to treat anaemia, e.g. an iron compound

**haemato-** /hi:mətəʊ/ *prefix* referring to blood

**haematocolpos** /,hi:mətəʊ'kɒlpəs/ *noun* a condition in which the vagina is filled with blood at menstruation because the hymen has no opening

**haematocrit** /'hi:mətəʊkrɪt/ *noun* same as **packed cell volume**

**haematocyst** /'hi:mətəʊsɪst/ *noun* a cyst which contains blood

**haematological** /,hi:mətəʊ'lɒdʒɪk(ə)/ *adjective* referring to haematology

**haematologist** /,hi:mətəʊ'lɒdʒɪst/ *noun* a doctor who specialises in haematology

**haematology** /,hi:mə'tɒlədʒɪ/ *noun* the scientific study of blood, its formation and its diseases

**haematoma** /,hi:mə'təʊmə/ *noun* a mass of blood under the skin caused by a blow or by the effects of an operation

**haematometra** /,hi:mə'tɒmɪtrə/ *noun* excessive bleeding in the uterus

**haematomyelia** /,hi:mətəʊmaɪ'i:liə/ *noun* a condition in which blood leaks into the spinal cord

**haematopoiesis** /,hi:mətəʊpɔɪ'i:zɪs/ *noun* same as **haemopoiesis**

**haematosalpinx** /,hi:mətəʊ'sælpɪŋks/ *noun* same as **haemosalpinx**

**haematoozoön** /,hi:mətəʊ'zəʊzɒn/ *noun* a parasite living in the blood (NOTE: The plural is **haematozoa**.)

**haematuria** /,hi:mə'tjʊəriə/ *noun* the unusual presence of blood in the urine, as a result of injury or disease of the kidney or bladder

**haemin** /'hi:mɪn/ *noun* a salt derived from haemoglobin, used in the treatment of porphyria

**haemo-** /hi:məʊ/ *prefix* referring to blood

**haemochromatosis** /,hi:məʊkrəʊmə'təʊsɪs/ *noun* an inherited disease in which the body absorbs and stores too much iron, causing cirrhosis of the liver and giving the skin a dark colour. Also called **bronze diabetes**

**haemoconcentration** /,hi:məʊ,kɒnsən'treɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* an increase in the percentage of red blood cells because the volume of plasma is reduced. Compare **haemodilution**

**haemocytometer** /,hi:məʊsai'tɒmɪtə/ *noun* a glass jar in which a sample of blood is diluted and the blood cells counted

**haemodialysed patient** /,hi:məʊdaɪləaɪzd 'peɪf(ə)nt/ *noun* someone who has undergone haemodialysis

**haemodialysis** /,hi:məʊdaɪ'æləʊsɪs/ *noun* same as **kidney dialysis**

**haemodilution** /,hi:məʊdaɪ'lu:f(ə)nt/ *noun* a decrease in the percentage of red blood cells because the volume of plasma has increased. Compare **haemoconcentration**

**haemoglobin** /,hi:mə'gləʊbɪn/ *noun* a red respiratory pigment formed of haem and globin in red blood cells which gives blood its red colour. It absorbs oxygen in the lungs and carries it in the blood to the tissues. Abbreviation **Hb**.  $\phi$  **oxyhaemoglobin**, **carboxyhaemoglobin**

**haemoglobinaemia** /,hi:məʊgləʊbɪ'ni:miə/ *noun* a condition in which haemoglobin is found in blood plasma

**haemoglobinopathy** /,hi:məʊgləʊbɪ'nɒpəθi/ *noun* an inherited disease of a group which result from damaging variations in the production of haemoglobin, e.g. sickle-cell anaemia

**haemoglobinuria** /,hi:məʊgləʊbɪ'njuəriə/ *noun* a condition in which haemoglobin is found in the urine

**haemogram** /'hi:məʊgræm/ *noun* the printed result of a blood test

**haemolysin** /,hi:məʊ'laɪsɪn/ *noun* a protein which destroys red blood cells

**haemolysis** /hi:'mbləʊsɪs/ *noun* the destruction of red blood cells

**haemolytic** /,hi:məʊ'litɪk/ *adjective* destroying red blood cells ■ *noun* a substance which destroys red blood cells, e.g. snake venom

**haemolytic anaemia** /,hi:mə'litɪk ə'ni:miə/ *noun* a condition in which the destruction of red blood cells is about six times the usual rate, and the supply of new cells from the bone marrow cannot meet the demand

**haemolytic disease of the newborn** /,hi:mə'litɪk dɪ'zi:z əv ðə 'nju:bɔ:n/ *noun* a condition in which the red blood cells of the fetus are destroyed because antibodies in the mother's blood react against them

**haemolytic jaundice** /,hi:mə'litɪk 'dʒɔ:ndɪs/ *noun* jaundice caused by haemolysis of the red blood cells. Also called **prehepatic jaundice**

**haemolytic uraemic syndrome** /,hi:mə'litɪk ju'ri:mɪk sɪndrəʊm/ *noun* a condition in which haemolytic anaemia damages the kidneys

**haemopericardium** /,hi:məʊpeɪ'kɑ:diəm/ *noun* a condition in which blood is found in the pericardium

**haemoperitoneum** /,hi:məʊpeɪtə'ni:əm/ *noun* a condition in which blood is found in the peritoneal cavity

**haemophilia A** /,hi:məʊfɪliə 'eɪ/ *noun* the most common type of haemophilia, in which the inability to synthesise Factor VIII, a protein that promotes blood clotting, means that the blood clots very slowly

**haemophilia B** /,hi:məʊfɪliə 'bi:/ *noun* a less common type of haemophilia, in which the inability to synthesise Factor IX, a protein that promotes blood clotting, means that the blood clots very slowly. Also called **Christmas disease**

**haemophilic** /,hi:mə'fɪliæk/ *noun* a person who has haemophilia

**haemophilic** /,hi:məʊ'fɪlɪk/ *adjective* referring to haemophilia

**Haemophilus** /hi:'mɒfɪləs/ *noun* a genus of bacteria which needs specific factors in the blood to grow

**Haemophilus influenzae** /hi:'mɒfɪləs ,ɪnflu'enzə/ *noun* a bacterium which lives in healthy throats, but which can cause pneumonia if a person's resistance is lowered by a bout of flu

**Haemophilus influenzae type b** /hi:'mɒfɪləs ɪnflu,enzə taɪp 'bi:/ *noun* a bacterium which causes meningitis. Abbreviation **Hib**

**haemophthalmia** /,hi:mɒf'θælmɪə/ *noun* a condition in which blood is found in the vitreous humour of the eye

**haemopneumothorax** /,hi:məʊ'nju:məʊ 'θɔ:ræks/ *noun* same as **pneumohaemothorax**

**haemopoiesis** /,hi:məʊpɔ:'i:zɪs/ *noun* the continual production of blood cells and blood platelets in the bone marrow. Also called **blood formation**

**haemopoietic** /,hi:məʊpɔ:'etɪk/ *adjective* referring to the formation of blood in the bone marrow

**haemoptysis** /hi:'mɒptəʊsɪs/ *noun* a condition in which someone coughs blood from the lungs, caused by a serious illness such as anaemia, pneumonia, tuberculosis or cancer

**haemorrhage** /'hem(ə)rɪdʒ/ *noun* the loss of a large quantity of blood, especially from a burst blood vessel ○ *He died of a brain haemorrhage.* ■ *verb* to bleed heavily ○ *The injured man was haemorrhaging from the mouth.*

**haemorrhagic** /,hemə'rædʒɪk/ *adjective* referring to heavy bleeding

**haemorrhagic disease of the newborn** /,hemə'rædʒɪk dɪ'zi:z əv ðə 'nju:bɔ:n/ *noun* a disease of newly born babies, which makes them haemorrhage easily, caused by temporary lack of prothrombin

**haemorrhagic disorder** /hemə'rædʒɪk dɪs'ɔ:diə/ *noun* a disorder in which haemorrhages occur, e.g. haemophilia



**haemorrhagic stroke** /,hemərədʒɪk 'strɔʊk/ *noun* a stroke caused by a burst blood vessel

**haemorrhoidectomy** /,hemərəɪ'dektəmi/ *noun* the surgical removal of haemorrhoids

**haemorrhoids** /'hemərəɪdz/ *plural noun* swollen veins in the anorectal passage. Also called **piles**

**haemosalpinx** /hi:məu'sælpiŋks/ *noun* the accumulation of blood in the Fallopian tubes

**haemosiderosis** /,hi:məusɪdə'rəʊsɪs/ *noun* a disorder in which iron forms large deposits in the tissue, causing haemorrhaging and destruction of red blood cells

**haemostasis** /,hi:məu'steɪsɪs/ *noun* the process of stopping bleeding or slowing the movement of blood

**haemostat** /'hi:məustæt/ *noun* a device which stops bleeding, e.g. a clamp

**haemostatic** /,hi:məu'stætɪk/ *adjective* stopping bleeding ■ *noun* a drug which stops bleeding

**haemothorax** /,hi:məu'θɔ:ræks/ *noun* a condition in which blood is found in the pleural cavity

**Hageman factor** /'hɑ:gəmən ,fæktə/ *noun* same as **Factor XII**

**HAI** *abbreviation* Hospital Acquired Infection

**hair cell** /'heə sel/ *noun* a receptor cell which converts fluid pressure changes into nerve impulses carried in the auditory nerve (NOTE: For other terms referring to hair, see words beginning with **pilo-**, **trich-**, **tricho-**.)

**hair follicle** /'heə ,fɒlɪk(ə)/ *noun* the cells and tissue that surround the root of a hair

**hairline fracture** /,heəlaɪn 'fræktʃə/ *noun* a very slight crack in a bone caused by injury

**hair papilla** /,heə pə'pɪlə/ *noun* a part of the skin containing capillaries which feed blood to the hair

**half-life** /'hɑ:f laɪf/ *noun* **1.** a measurement of the period of time taken before the concentration of a drug has reached half of what it was when it was administered **2.** the time taken for half the atoms in a radioactive isotope to decay

**halitosis** /,hæli'təʊsɪs/ *noun* a condition in which a person has breath which smells unpleasant. Also called **bad breath**

**hallucinate** /hə'lʊ:sɪneɪt/ *verb* to have hallucinations ○ *The patient was hallucinating.*

**hallucination** /hə'lʊ:sɪ'neɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* an experience of seeing an imaginary scene or hearing an imaginary sound as clearly as if it were really there

**hallucinatory** /hə'lʊ:sɪnət(ə)rɪ/ *adjective* referring to a drug which causes hallucinations

**hallucinogen** /,hælu:'sɪnədʒən/ *noun* a drug which causes hallucinations, e.g. cannabis or LSD

**hallucinogenic** /hə'lʊ:sɪnə'dʒenɪk/ *adjective* referring to a substance which produces hallucinations ○ *a hallucinogenic fungus*

**hallux** /'hæləks/ *noun* the big toe (NOTE: The plural is **halluces**.)

**hallux valgus** /,hæləks 'vælɡəs/ *noun* a condition of the foot, where the big toe turns towards the other toes and a bunion is formed

**haloperidol** /,hæləu'perɪdɒl/ *noun* a tranquiliser used in the treatment of schizophrenia, mania and psychoses

**halo splint** /'heɪləʊ splɪnt/ *noun* a device used to keep the head and neck still so that they can recover from injury or an operation

**halothane** /'hæləθeɪn/ *noun* a general anaesthetic that is given by inhalation

**hamartoma** /,hæmə'təʊmə/ *noun* a benign tumour containing tissue from any organ

**hamate** /'heɪmeɪt/, **hamate bone** /'heɪmeɪt bəʊn/ *noun* one of the eight small carpal bones in the wrist, shaped like a hook. Also called **unciform bone**. See illustration at **HAND** in Supplement

**hammer** /'hæmə/ *noun* same as **malleus**

**hammer toe** /'hæmə təʊ/ *noun* a toe which has the middle joint permanently bent downwards

**hamstring** /'hæmstrɪŋ/ *noun* one of a group of tendons behind the knee, which link the thigh muscles to the bones in the lower leg

**hamstring muscles** /'hæmstrɪŋ ,mas(ə)lz/ *plural noun* a group of muscles at the back of the thigh, which flex the knee and extend the gluteus maximus

**hand** /hænd/ *noun* the part at the end of the arm, beyond the wrist, which is used for holding things ○ *He injured his hand with a saw.*

**hand, foot and mouth disease** /,hænd fʊt ən 'maʊθ dɪ,zɪ:z/ *noun* a mild viral infection in children, causing small blisters

**handicap** /'hændɪkæp/ *noun* a physical or mental condition which prevents someone from doing some everyday activities ■ *verb* to prevent someone from doing an everyday activity (NOTE: The word 'handicap' is now usually avoided.)

**handicapped** /'hændɪkæpt/ *adjective* referring to a person who has a disability (NOTE: The word 'handicapped' is now usually avoided.)

**hangnail** /'hæŋneɪl/ *noun* a piece of torn skin at the side of a nail

**hangover** /'hæŋəʊvə/ *noun* a condition occurring after a person has drunk too much alcohol, with dehydration caused by inhibition of the anti-diuretic hormone in the kidneys. The symptoms include headache, inability to stand noise and trembling of the hands.

**Hansen's disease** /'hænsənz dɪ,zɪz/ *noun* same as **leprosy**

**haploid** /'hæplɔɪd/ *adjective* referring to a cell such as a gamete where each chromosome occurs only once. In humans the haploid number of chromosomes is 23.

**hapt-** /hæpt/ *prefix* relating to the sense of touch

**hardening of the arteries** /,hɑːd(ə)nɪŋ əv ðə 'ɑːtəriːz/ *noun* same as **atherosclerosis**

**harelip** /'heəlɪp/ *noun* same as **cleft lip**

**Harrison's sulcus** /,hæris(ə)nz 'sʌlk(ə)s/, **Harrison's groove** /,hæris(ə)nz 'gruːv/ *noun* a hollow on either side of the chest which develops in children who have difficulty in breathing, seen especially in cases of rickets

**Harris's operation** /'hærisɪz ɒpə'reɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the surgical removal of the prostate gland [After S.H. Harris (1880–1936), Australian surgeon.]

**Hartmann's solution** /'hɑːtmənz sə ,luːf(ə)n/ *noun* a chemical solution used in drips to replace body fluids lost in dehydration, particularly as a result of infantile gastroenteritis [Described 1932. After Alexis Frank Hartmann (1898–1964), paediatrician, St Louis, Missouri, USA.]

**Hartnup disease** /'hɑːtnəp dɪ,zɪz/ *noun* an inherited condition affecting amino acid metabolism and producing thick skin and impaired mental development [After the name of the family in which this hereditary disease was first recorded.]

**harvest** /'hɑːvɪst/ *verb* to take something for use elsewhere, e.g. a piece of skin for a graft or eggs for IVF

**Hashimoto's disease** /hæ'fɪ'məʊtəz dɪ,zɪz/ *noun* a type of goitre in middle-aged women, where the woman is sensitive to secretions from her own thyroid gland, and, in extreme cases, the face swells and the skin turns yellow [Described 1912. After Hakuru Hashimoto (1881–1934), Japanese surgeon.]

**hashish** /'hæʃɪʃ/ *noun* ♦ **cannabis**

**hastrum** /'hɑːstrəm/ *noun* a sac on the outside of the colon (NOTE: The plural is **hastra**.)

**HAV** *abbreviation* hepatitis A virus

**Haversian canal** /hə'vɜːʃ(ə)n kə,næl/ *noun* a fine canal which runs vertically through the Haversian systems in compact bone, containing blood vessels and lymph ducts [Described 1689. After Clopton Havers (1657–1702), English surgeon.]

**Haversian system** /hə'vɜːʃ(ə)n ,sɪstəm/ *noun* a unit of compact bone built around a Haversian canal, made of a series of bony layers which form a cylinder. Also called **osteon**

**hayfever** /'heɪfɪ:vəl/ *noun* inflammation in the nasal passage and eyes caused by an allergic reaction to plant pollen

**Hb** *abbreviation* haemoglobin

**HBV** *abbreviation* hepatitis B virus

**hCG** *abbreviation* human chorionic gonadotrophin

**HCHS** *abbreviation* Health and Community Health Services

**HDL** *abbreviation* high density lipoprotein

**head** /hed/ *noun* **1.** the round top part of the body, which contains the eyes, nose, mouth, brain, etc (NOTE: For other terms referring to the head, see words beginning with **cephal-**, **cephalo-**) **2.** a rounded top part of a bone which fits into a socket ○ *head of humerus* ○ *head of femur*

**headache** /'hedeɪk/ *noun* a pain in the head, caused by changes in pressure in the blood vessels feeding the brain which act on the nerves. Also called **cephalgia**

**head cold** /'hed kəʊld/ *noun* a minor illness, with inflammation of the nasal passages, excess mucus in the nose and sneezing

**head louse** /'hed laʊs/ *noun* a small insect of the *Pediculus* genus, which lives on the scalp and sucks blood. Also called **Pediculus capitis** (NOTE: The plural is **head lice**.)

**Heaf test** /'hiːf test/ *noun* a test in which tuberculin is injected into the skin to find out whether a person is immune to tuberculosis. † **Mantoux test**

**heal** /hiːl/ *verb* **1.** (of wound) to return to a healthy state ○ *After six weeks, her wound had still not healed.* ○ *A minor cut will heal faster if it is left without a bandage.* **2.** to make someone or something get better

**healing** /'hiːlɪŋ/ *noun* the process of getting better ○ *a substance which will accelerate the healing process*

**healing by first intention** /,hiːlɪŋ baɪ ,fɜːstɪn'tenʃən/ *noun* the healing of a clean wound where the tissue reforms quickly

**healing by second intention** /,hiːlɪŋ baɪ ,sekəndɪn'tenʃən/ *noun* the healing of an infected wound or ulcer, which takes place slowly and may leave a permanent scar

**health** /helθ/ *noun* the general condition of the mind or body ○ *He's in good health.* ○ *She had suffered from bad health for some years.* ○ *The council said that fumes from the factory were a danger to public health.* ○ *All cigarette packets carry a government health warning.*

**Health and Safety at Work Act** /,helθ ən ,seɪftɪət 'wɜːk ,ækt/ *noun* in the UK, an Act of Parliament which rules how the health of workers should be protected by the companies they work for

**Health and Safety Executive** /,helθ ən 'seɪftɪ ɪg,zekjʊtɪv/ *noun* in the UK, a government organisation responsible for overseeing the health and safety of workers

**health authority** /'helθ ɔ:,θɔrətɪ/ *noun* ▶ **Strategic Health Authority**

**healthcare** /'helθkeə/, **health care** *noun* the general treatment of people with medical disorders, especially the use of measures to stop a disease from occurring

**healthcare assistant** /'helθkeə ə,sɪstənt/ *noun* someone who assists health professionals in looking after a sick or dependent person

**Healthcare Commission** /'helθkeə kə ,mɪf(ə)n/ *noun* the independent inspection body for the NHS

**healthcare delivery** /'helθkeə dɪ,lɪv(ə)rɪ/ *noun* the provision of care and treatment by the health service

**healthcare professional** /'helθkeə prə ,feɪ(ə)n(ə)l/ *noun* a qualified person who works in an occupation related to health care, e.g. a nurse

**healthcare system** /'helθkeə ,sɪstəm/ *noun* any organised set of health services

**health centre** /'helθ ,sentə/ *noun* a public building in which a group of doctors practise

**health education** /'helθ ,edʒʊkeɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the process of teaching people, both school children and adults, to do things to improve their health, e.g. to take more exercise

**Health Education Authority** /,helθ ,edʒʊ 'keɪʃ(ə)n ɔ:,θɔrɪtɪ/ *noun* a government health promotion agency in England designed to help people make aware of how they can improve their health. Abbreviation **HEA**

**health food** /'helθ fu:d/ *noun* food that is regarded as good for health, especially containing ingredients such as cereals, dried fruit and nuts and without additives

**health inequality** /'helθ ɪnɪ,kwələtɪ/ *noun* the differences that exist in health across the social classes, with poorer people tending to experience poorer health

**health information service** /,helθ ɪnfə 'meɪʃ(ə)n ,sɜ:vɪs/ *noun* a nation-wide information service delivered via a free telephone helpline. Abbreviation **HIS**

**health insurance** /'helθ ɪn,fʊərəns/ *noun* insurance which pays the cost of treatment for illness

**Health Ombudsman** /'helθ ,ɒmbʊdzmən/ *noun* same as **Health Service Commissioner**

**health promotion** /'helθ prə,məʊʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the act of improving the health of a particular community or of the public generally, e.g. using health education, immunisation and screening

**Health Protection Agency** /,helθ prə 'tekʃ(ə)n ,eɪdʒənsɪ/ *noun* a national organisation for England and Wales, established in 2003, dedicated to the protection of people's health, especially by reducing the impact of infectious diseases, chemicals, poisons and radiation. It

brings together existing sources of expertise in public health, communicable diseases, emergency planning, infection control, poisons and radiation hazards. Abbreviation **HPA**

**health service** /'helθ ,sɜ:vɪs/ *noun* an organisation which is in charge of providing health care to a particular community

**Health Service Commissioner** /,helθ ,sɜ:vɪs kə'mɪʃ(ə)nəl/, **Health Service Ombudsman** /'helθ ,sɜ:vɪs ,ɒmbʊdzmən/ *noun* in the UK, an official who investigates complaints from the public about the National Health Service

**health service manager** /,helθ ,sɜ:vɪs 'mænɪdʒə/ *noun* someone who is responsible for the provision of local health care, through the management of hospital, GP, and community health services

**health service planning** /,helθ ,sɜ:vɪs 'plænɪŋ/ *noun* the process of deciding what the health care needs of a community are, with the help of statistics, and what resources can be provided for that community

**health service reforms** /,helθ ,sɜ:vɪs rɪ 'fɔ:mz/ *plural noun* any of several reforms to the NHS, the most recent package of reforms being that introduced in 2002

**health visitor** /'helθ ,vɪzɪtə/ *noun* a registered nurse with qualifications in midwifery or obstetrics and preventive medicine, who visits mothers and babies and sick people in their homes and advises on treatment

**hear** /hɪə/ *verb* to sense sounds with the ears ○ *I can't hear what you're saying.* (NOTE: **hearing – heard**)

**hearing** /'hɪərɪŋ/ *noun* the ability to hear, or the function performed by the ear of sensing sounds and sending sound impulses to the brain ○ *His hearing is failing.* (NOTE: For other terms referring to hearing, see words beginning with **audi-, audio-**.)

**hearing aid** /'hɪərɪŋ eɪd/ *noun* a small electronic device fitted into or near the ear, to improve someone's hearing by making the sounds louder

**hearing-impaired** /,hɪərɪŋ ɪm'peəd/ *adjective* having a degree of hearing loss

**hearing loss** /'hɪərɪŋ lɒs/ *noun* partial or complete loss of the ability to hear

**heart** /hɑ:t/ *noun* the main organ in the body, which maintains the circulation of the blood around the body by its pumping action ○ *The doctor listened to his heart.* ○ *She has heart trouble.* (NOTE: For other terms referring to the heart, see also words beginning with **cardi-, cardio-**.)

**heart attack** /'hɑ:t ə,tæk/ *noun* a condition in which the heart has a reduced blood supply because one of the arteries becomes blocked by a blood clot, causing myocardial ischaemia and myocardial infarction (*informal*)

**heartbeat** /'hɑ:tbi:t/ *noun* the regular noise made by the heart as it pumps blood

**heart block** /'hɑ:t blɒk/ *noun* the slowing of the action of the heart because the impulses from the sinoatrial node to the ventricles are delayed or interrupted. There are either longer impulses (first degree block) or missing impulses (second degree block) or no impulses at all (complete heart block), in which case the ventricles continue to beat slowly and independently of the sinoatrial node.

**heartburn** /'hɑ:tbɜ:n/ *noun* indigestion which causes a burning feeling in the stomach and oesophagus, and a flow of acid saliva into the mouth (*informal*)

**heart bypass** /'hɑ:t ,bɑ:pɑ:s pə'reɪf(ə)n/,  
**heart bypass operation** *noun* same as **coronary artery bypass graft**

**heart disease** /'hɑ:t di:zɪz/ *noun* any disease of the heart in general

**heart failure** /'hɑ:t ,feɪljə/ *noun* the failure of the heart to maintain the output of blood to meet the demands of the body. It may affect the left or right sides of the heart, or both sides.

**heart-lung machine** /'hɑ:t 'lʌŋ məʃi:n/ *noun* a machine used to pump blood round the body and maintain the supply of oxygen to the blood during heart surgery

**heart-lung transplant** /'hɑ:t 'lʌŋ ,trænsplɑ:nt/ *noun* an operation to transplant a new heart and lungs into someone

**heart massage** /'hɑ:t ,mæsɑ:ʒ/ *noun* a treatment which involves pressing on the chest to make a heart which has stopped beating start working again

**heart murmur** /'hɑ:t ,mɜ:mə/ *noun* an unusual sound made by turbulent blood flow, sometimes as a result of valve disease

**heart rate** /'hɑ:t reɪt/ *noun* the number of times the heart beats per minute

**heart sounds** /'hɑ:t saʊndz/ *plural noun* two different sounds made by the heart as it beats.  $\diamond$  **lubb-dupp**

**heart surgeon** /'hɑ:t ,sɜ:dʒən/ *noun* a surgeon who specialises in operations on the heart

**heart surgery** /'hɑ:t ,sɜ:dʒəri/ *noun* a surgical operation to remedy a condition of the heart

**heart tamponade** /'hɑ:t tæmpə'neɪd/ *noun* same as **cardiac tamponade**

**heart transplant** /'hɑ:t ,trænsplɑ:nt/ *noun* a surgical operation to transplant a heart into someone

**heat rash** /'hi:t ræʃ/ *noun* same as **miliaria**

**heat spots** /'hi:t spɒts/ *plural noun* little red spots which develop on the face in very hot weather

**heatstroke** /'hi:tstrəʊk/ *noun* a condition in which someone becomes too hot and his or her

body temperature rises abnormally, leading to headaches, stomach cramps and sometimes loss of consciousness

**heat therapy** /'hi:t ,θerəpi/, **heat treatment** /'hi:t ,tri:tmənt/ *noun* same as **thermotherapy**

**heavy period** /'hevi 'pɪəriəd/ *noun* a monthly period during which a woman loses an unusually large amount of blood. It is often painful and sometimes indicates possible health problems, such as fibroids or hypothyroidism.

**Heberden's node** /'hi:bədənz 'nəʊd/ *noun* a small bony lump which develops on the end joints of fingers in osteoarthritis [Described 1802. After William Heberden (1767–1845), British physician, specialist in rheumatic diseases.]

**hebetude** /'hebitju:d/ *noun* dullness of the senses during acute fever, which makes the person uninterested in his or her surroundings and unable to respond to stimuli

**hectic** /'hektɪk/ *adjective* recurring regularly

**hectic fever** /'hektɪk 'fi:vəl/ *noun* an attack of fever which occurs each day in someone who has tuberculosis

**heel** /hi:l/ *noun* the back part of the foot

**heel bone** /'hi:l bəʊn/ *noun* the bone forming the heel, beneath the talus. Also called **calcaneus**

**Hegar's sign** /'heɪgəz ,saɪn/ *noun* a way of detecting pregnancy, by inserting the fingers into the uterus and pressing with the other hand on the pelvic cavity to feel if the neck of the uterus has become soft [After Alfred Hegar (1830–1914), Professor of Obstetrics and Gynaecology at Freiburg, Germany.]

**Heimlich manoeuvre** /'haɪmlɪk mə'nu:vəl/ *noun* an emergency treatment for choking, in which a strong upward push beneath the breastbone of a patient clasped from behind forces the blockage out of the windpipe

**helco-** /helkəʊ/ *prefix* relating to an ulcer

**helcoplasty** /'helkəʊplæsti/ *noun* a skin graft to cover an ulcer to aid healing

**Helicobacter pylori** /'helɪkəʊbæktə paɪ 'lɔ:ri:/ *noun* a bacterium found in gastric secretions, strongly associated with duodenal ulcers and gastric carcinoma. Abbreviation **H pylori**

**helicopter-based emergency medical services** /'helɪkəptə beɪst ɪ'mɜ:dʒənsɪ 'medɪk(ə)l ,sɜ:vɪsɪz/ *plural noun* full form of **HEMS**

**helio-** /hi:liəʊ/ *prefix* relating to the sun

**heliotherapy** /'hi:liəʊ'θerəpi/ *noun* treatment by sunlight or sunbathing

**helium** /'hi:liəm/ *noun* a very light gas used in combination with oxygen, especially to relieve asthma or sickness caused by decompression (NOTE: The chemical symbol is **He**.)

**helix** /'hi:lɪks/ *noun* the curved outer edge of the ear

**Heller's operation** /'heləz ɒpə'reɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* same as **cardiomyotomy** [After E. Heller (1877–1964), German surgeon.]

**Heller's test** /'heləz test/ *noun* a test for protein in the urine [After Johann Florenz Heller (1813–71), Austrian physician.]

**Helin's law** /,helɪnz 'lɔ:l/ *noun* a finding which states that twins should occur naturally once in 90 live births, triplets once in 8,100 live births, quadruplets once in 729,000 live births, and quintuplets once in 65,610,000 live births (NOTE: Since the 1960s the numbers have changed due to fertility treatment. For example, twins now occur once in only 38 births.)

**HELLP syndrome** /'help ,sɪndrəʊm/ *noun* a serious pre-eclamptic disorder which makes it necessary to terminate a pregnancy. Full form **haemolysis-elevated liver enzymes–low platelet count syndrome**

**helminth** /'helmɪnθ/ *noun* a parasitic worm, e.g. a tapeworm or fluke

**helminthiasis** /,helmɪn'θaɪəsɪs/ *noun* infestation with parasitic worms

**heloma** /hɪ'ləʊmə/ *noun* same as **corn**

**helper T-cell** /,helpə 'ti: sel/ *noun* a type of white blood cell that stimulates the production of cells that destroy antigens

**hemeralopia** /,hemərə'ləʊpiə/ *noun* a usually congenital condition in which someone is able to see better in bad light than in ordinary daylight. Also called **day blindness**

**hemi-** /hemi/ *prefix* half

**hemianopia** /,hemɪə'nəʊpiə/ *noun* a state of partial blindness in which someone has only half the usual field of vision in each eye

**hemiarthroplasty** /,hemi'ɑ:θrəʊplæsti/ *noun* an operation to repair a joint which replaces one of its surfaces with an artificial substance, often metal

**hemiballismus** /,hemɪbə'lɪzməs/ *noun* a sudden movement of the limbs on one side of the body, caused by a disease of the basal ganglia

**hemicolectomy** /,hemɪkə'lektəmi/ *noun* the surgical removal of part of the colon

**hemimelia** /,hemi'mi:lɪə/ *noun* a congenital condition in which someone has absent or extremely short arms or legs

**hemiparesis** /,hemɪpə'ri:sɪs/ *noun* slight paralysis of the muscles of one side of the body

**hemiplegia** /,hemi'pli:dʒə/ *noun* severe paralysis affecting one side of the body due to damage of the central nervous system. Compare **diplegia**

**hemisphere** /'hemɪsfɪə/ *noun* half of a sphere

**HEMS** /hemz/ *plural noun* a system of delivering a paramedic crew to the scene of an accident or

medical emergency by helicopter and then transporting patients to the nearest major hospital or specialist unit. Full form **helicopter-based emergency medical services**

**Henderson's model** /'hendəs(ə)nz ,mɒd(ə)l/ *noun* a model of nurse–patient relationships based on 14 basic principles of nursing. The main idea is that "the nurse does for others what they would do for themselves if they had the strength, the will, and the knowledge...but that the nurse makes the patient independent of him or her as soon as possible".

**Henle's loop** /,henlɪz 'lu:p/ *noun* same as **loop of Henle** [Described 1862. After Friedrich Gustav Jakob Henle (1809–85), Professor of Anatomy at Göttingen, Germany.]

**Henoch-Schönlein purpura** /,henək ,ʃɜ:nlaɪn 'pɜ:pjʊərə/, **Henoch's purpura** /,henəks 'pɜ:pjʊərə/ *noun* a condition in which blood vessels become inflamed and bleed into the skin, causing a rash called purpura and also pain in the stomach and the joints, vomiting and diarrhoea. It often occurs after an upper respiratory infection, mostly in children aged two to 11. [Described 1832 by Schönlein and 1865 by Henoch. Eduard Heinrich Henoch (1820–1910), Professor of Paediatrics at Berlin, Germany; Johannes Lukas Schönlein (1793–1864), physician and pathologist at Würzburg, Zürich and Berlin.]

**heparin** /'hepərɪn/ *noun* an anticoagulant substance found in the liver and lungs, and also produced artificially for use in the treatment of thrombosis

**hepat-** /hɪpæt/ *prefix* same as **hepato-** (used before vowels)

**hepatectomy** /,hepə'tektəmi/ *noun* the surgical removal of part of the liver

**hepatic** /hɪ'pætɪk/ *adjective* referring to the liver

**hepatic artery** /hɪ,pætɪk 'ɑ:təri/ *noun* an artery which takes the blood to the liver

**hepatic cell** /hɪ,pætɪk 'sel/ *noun* an epithelial cell of the liver acini

**hepatic duct** /hɪ,pætɪk 'dʌkt/ *noun* a duct which links the liver to the bile duct leading to the duodenum

**hepatic flexure** /hɪ,pætɪk 'flekʃə/ *noun* a bend in the colon, where the ascending and transverse colons join

**hepaticostomy** /hɪ,pætɪ'kɒstəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to make an opening in the hepatic duct taking bile from the liver

**hepatic portal system** /hɪ,pætɪk 'pɔ:t(ə)l ,sɪstəm/ *noun* a group of veins linking to form the portal vein, which brings blood from the pancreas, spleen, gall bladder and the abdominal part of the alimentary canal to the liver

**hepatic vein** /hɪˈpætɪk ˈveɪn/ *noun* a vein which takes blood from the liver to the inferior vena cava

**hepatitis** /ˌhepəˈtʌɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the liver through disease or drugs

**hepatitis A** /ˌhepəˈtʌɪtɪs ˈeɪ/ *noun* a relatively mild form of viral hepatitis that is transmitted through contaminated food and water

**hepatitis A virus** /ˌhepəˈtʌɪtɪs ˈeɪ ˌvaɪrəs/ *noun* a virus which causes hepatitis A. Abbreviation **HAV**

**hepatitis B** /ˌhepəˈtʌɪtɪs ˈbiː/ *noun* a severe form of viral hepatitis that is transmitted by contact with infected blood or other body fluids

**hepatitis B virus** /ˌhepəˈtʌɪtɪs ˈbiː ˌvaɪrəs/ *noun* a virus which causes hepatitis B. Abbreviation **HBV**

**hepatitis C** /ˌhepəˈtʌɪtɪs ˈsiː/ *noun* a form of viral hepatitis that is transmitted by contact with infected blood or other body fluids but is often without symptoms (NOTE: It was formerly called non-A, non-B hepatitis.)

**hepatitis C virus** /ˌhepəˈtʌɪtɪs ˈsiː ˌvaɪrəs/ *noun* a virus which causes hepatitis C. Abbreviation **HCV**

**hepato-** /hepəˈtəʊ/ *prefix* referring to the liver

**hepatocellular** /ˌhepəˈtəʊˌseljʊlə/ *adjective* referring to liver cells

**hepatocellular jaundice** /ˌhepəˈtəʊˌseljʊlə ˈdʒʌːndɪs/ *noun* jaundice caused by injury to or disease of the liver cells

**hepatocirrhosis** /ˌhepəˈtəʊsɪˈrʊʊsɪs/ *noun* same as **cirrhosis**

**hepatocyte** /ˌhepəˈtəʊsaɪt, hɪˈpætəsaɪt/ *noun* a liver cell which synthesises and stores substances, and produces bile

**hepatogenous** /ˌhepəˈtɒdʒənəs/ *noun* referring to or originating in the liver ○ *hepatogenous jaundice*

**hepatolenticular degeneration** /ˌhepəˈtəʊləntɪkjʊlə dɪˌdʒenəˈreɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* same as **Wilson's disease**

**hepatoma** /ˌhepəˈtəʊmə/ *noun* a malignant tumour of the liver formed of mature cells, especially found in people with cirrhosis

**hepatomegaly** /ˌhepəˈtəʊˌmegəli/ *noun* a condition in which the liver becomes very large

**hepatosplenomegaly** /ˌhepəˈtəʊˌsplɪːnəʊ ˈmegəli/ *noun* enlargement of both the liver and the spleen, as occurs in leukaemia or lymphoma

**hepatotoxic** /ˌhepəˈtəʊˌtɒksɪk/ *adjective* destroying the liver cells

**herbalism** /ˈhɜːbəlɪz(ə)m/ *noun* ♦ **herbal medicine**

**herbalist** /ˈhɜːbəlɪst/ *noun* a person who treats illnesses or disorders with substances extracted from plants

**herbal medicine** /ˌhɜːb(ə)l ˈmed(ə)sɪn/ *noun* a system of medical treatment involving the use of substances extracted from plants

**herbal remedy** /ˌhɜːb(ə)l ˈremədi/ *noun* a medicine made from plants, e.g. an infusion made from dried leaves or flowers in hot water

**herd immunity** /ˈhɜːd ɪˌmjuːnɪti/ *noun* the fact of a group of people being resistant to a specific disease, because many individuals in the group are immune to or immunised against the microorganism which causes it

**hereditary** /həˈredɪt(ə)rɪ/ *adjective* passed as from parents to children through the genes

**hereditary spherocytosis** /hɪˌredɪt(ə)rɪ ˌsfɪərəʊsaɪˈtəʊsɪs/ *noun* same as **acholuric jaundice**

**heredity** /həˈredɪti/ *noun* the process by which genetically controlled characteristics pass from parents to children

**Hering-Breuer reflexes** /ˌherɪŋ ˈbrɔʊə ˌrɪˌfleksɪz/ *plural noun* the reflexes which maintain the usual rhythmic inflation and deflation of the lungs

**hermaphrodite** /hɜːˈmæfrədaɪt/ *noun* a person with both male and female characteristics

**hermaphroditism** /hɜːˈmæfrədaɪtɪz(ə)m/ *noun* a condition in which a person has both male and female characteristics

**hernia** /ˈhɜːniə/ *noun* a condition in which an organ bulges through a hole or weakness in the wall which surrounds it. Also called **rupture**

**hernial** /ˈhɜːniəl/ *adjective* referring to a hernia

**hernial sac** /ˈhɜːniəl ˈsæk/ *noun* a sac formed where a membrane has pushed through a cavity in the body

**herniated** /ˈhɜːniətɪd/ *adjective* referring to an organ which has developed a hernia

**herniation** /ˌhɜːniˈeɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the development of a hernia

**hernio-** /hɜːniəʊ/ *prefix* relating to a hernia

**hernioplasty** /ˈhɜːniəʊˌplæsti/ *noun* a surgical operation to reduce a hernia

**herniorrhaphy** /ˌhɜːniˈɔːrəfi/ *noun* a surgical operation to remove a hernia and repair the organ through which it protruded

**herniotomy** /ˌhɜːniˈɒtəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to remove a hernial sac

**heroin** /ˈherəɪn/ *noun* a narcotic drug in the form of a white powder derived from morphine

**herpes** /ˈhɜːpiːz/ *noun* inflammation of the skin or mucous membrane, caused by a virus, where small blisters are formed

**herpes simplex** /ˌhɜːpiːz ˈsɪmpleks/ *noun* 1. (*Type 1*) a virus that produces a painful blister, called a cold sore, usually on the lips 2. (*Type II*) a sexually transmitted disease which forms blisters in the genital region. Also called **genital herpes**

**herpesvirus** /'hɜ:pɪ:z,vairəs/ *noun* one of a group of viruses which cause herpes and chickenpox (herpesvirus Type I), and genital herpes (herpesvirus Type II)

**herpes zoster** /,hɜ:pɪ:z 'zɒstə/ *noun* inflammation of a sensory nerve, characterised by pain along the nerve and causing a line of blisters to form on the skin, usually found mainly on the abdomen or back, or on the face. Also called **shingles, zona**

**herpetic** /hɜ:'petɪk/ *adjective* referring to herpes

**hetero-** /hetərəʊ/ *prefix* different

**heterochromia** /,hetərəʊ'krɒmɪə/ *noun* a condition in which the irises of the eyes are different colours

**heterogeneous** /,hetərəʊ'dʒi:niəs/ *adjective* having different characteristics or qualities (NOTE: Do not confuse with **heterogenous**.)

**heterogenous** /,hetə'rɒdʒɪnəs/ *adjective* coming from a different source (NOTE: Do not confuse with **heterogeneous**.)

**heterograft** /'hetərəʊgrɑ:ft/ *noun* tissue taken from one species and grafted onto an individual of another species. Compare **homograft**

**heterologous** /,hetə'rɒləgəs/ *adjective* of a different type

**heterophoria** /,hetərəʊ'fɔ:riə/ *noun* a condition in which if an eye is covered it tends to squint

**heteroplasty** /'hetərəʊplæsti/ *noun* same as **heterograft**

**heteropsia** /,hetə'rɒpsɪə/ *noun* a condition in which the two eyes see differently

**heterosexual** /,hetərəʊ'sekʃuəl/ *adjective* attracted to people of the opposite sex or relating to relations between males and females ■ *noun* a person who is sexually attracted to people of the opposite sex. Compare **bisexual, homosexual**

**heterosexuality** /,hetərəʊsekʃu'ælɪti/ *noun* sexual attraction towards persons of the opposite sex

**heterotopia** /,hetərəʊ'təʊpiə/ *noun* 1. a state where an organ is placed in a different position from usual or is malformed or deformed 2. the development of tissue which is not natural to the part in which it is produced

**heterotropia** /,hetərəʊ'trəʊpiə/ *noun* same as **strabismus**

**heterozygous** /,hetərəʊ'zɑ:ɡəs/ *adjective* having two or more different versions of a specific gene. Compare **homozygous**

**hex-** /heks/ *prefix* same as **hexa-** (NOTE: used before vowels)

**hexa-** /heksə/ *prefix* six

**HFEA** *abbreviation* Human Fertilization and Embryology Authority

**hGH** *abbreviation* human growth hormone

**HGPRT** *abbreviation* hypoxanthine guanine phosphoribosyl transferase. ♂ **HPRT**

**hiatus** /haɪ'eɪtəs/ *noun* an opening or space

**hiatus hernia** /haɪ,eɪtəs 'hɜ:niə/, **hiatal hernia** /haɪ,eɪt(ə)l 'hɜ:niə/ *noun* a hernia where the stomach bulges through the opening in the diaphragm muscle through which the oesophagus passes

**Hib** /hɪb/ *abbreviation* *Haemophilus influenzae* type B

**Hib vaccine** /'hɪb,væksɪ:n/ *noun* a vaccine used to inoculate against the bacterium *Haemophilus influenzae* that causes meningitis

**hiccup** /'hɪkʌp/, **hiccough** *noun* a spasm in the diaphragm which causes a sudden inhalation of breath followed by sudden closure of the glottis which makes a characteristic sound ○ *She had an attack of hiccups or had a hiccupping attack or got the hiccups.* Also called **singultus**

**Hickman catheter** /'hɪkmən,kæθɪtə/, **Hickman line** /'hɪkmən laɪn/ *noun* a plastic tube which is put into the large vein above the heart so that drugs can be given and blood samples can be taken easily

**hidr-** /haɪdr/ *prefix* referring to sweat

**hidradenitis** /,haɪdrədə'næɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the sweat glands

**hidrosis** /haɪ'drəʊsɪs/ *noun* sweating, especially when it is excessive

**hidrotic** /haɪ'drɒtɪk/ *adjective* referring to sweating ■ *noun* a substance which makes someone sweat

**high-altitude sickness** /,haɪ 'æltɪtju:d ,sɪknəs/ *noun* same as **altitude sickness**

**high blood pressure** /,haɪ 'blʌd ,preʃə/ *noun* same as **hypertension**

**high-calorie diet** /haɪ ,kæləri 'daɪət/ *noun* a diet containing over 4000 calories per day

**high-density lipoprotein** /,haɪ ,densɪti 'lɪpəʊ,prəʊtɪ:n/ *noun* a lipoprotein with a low percentage of cholesterol. Abbreviation **HDL**

**high-fibre diet** /,haɪ ,faɪbə 'daɪət/ *noun* a diet which contains a high percentage of cereals, nuts, fruit and vegetables

**high-protein diet** /,haɪ ,prəʊtɪ:n 'daɪət/ *noun* a diet containing mostly foods high in protein and low in carbohydrates and saturated fat, adopted by people who are trying to lose weight

**hilar** /'haɪlə/ *adjective* referring to a hilum

**hilum** /'haɪləm/ *noun* a hollow where blood vessels or nerve fibres enter an organ such as a kidney or lung (NOTE: The plural is **hila**.)

**hindbrain** /'haɪndbreɪn/ *noun* the part of brain of an embryo from which the medulla oblongata, the pons and the cerebellum eventually develop

**hindgut** /'haɪndɡʌt/ *noun* part of an embryo which develops into the colon and rectum

**hinge joint** /'hɪndʒ dʒɔɪnt/ *noun* same as **ginglymus**

**hip** /hɪp/ *noun* a ball and socket joint where the thigh bone or femur joins the acetabulum of the hip bone

**hip bone** /'hɪp bæʊn/ *noun* a bone made of the ilium, the ischium and the pubis which are fused together, forming part of the pelvic girdle. Also called **innominate bone**

**hip fracture** /'hɪp ˌfræktʃə/ *noun* a fracture of the ball at the top of the femur

**hip girdle** /'hɪp ˌɡɜːd(ə)l/ *noun* same as **pelvic girdle**

**hip joint** /'hɪp dʒɔɪnt/ *noun* the place where the hip is joined to the upper leg. See illustration at **PELVIS** in Supplement

**Hippel-Lindau** /,hɪpəl ˈlɪndəʊ/ † **von Hippel-Lindau syndrome**

**hippocampus** /,hɪpəʊˈkæmpəs/ *noun* a long rounded elevation projecting into the lateral ventricle in the brain

**Hippocratic oath** /,hɪpəkɹætɪk ˈəʊθ/ *noun* an ethical code observed by doctors, by which they will treat patients equally, put patients' welfare first and not discuss openly the details of a patient's case

**hip replacement** /'hɪp rɪˌpleɪsmənt/ *noun* a surgical operation to replace the whole ball and socket joint at the hip with an artificial one

**Hirschsprung's disease** /'hɪʃsprʌŋz dɪ ˌziːz/ *noun* a congenital condition where parts of the lower colon lack nerve cells, making peristalsis impossible, so that food accumulates in the upper colon which becomes swollen [Described 1888. After Harald Hirschsprung (1830–1916), Professor of Paediatrics in Copenhagen, Denmark.]

**hirsute** /'hɜːsjuːt/ *adjective* with a lot of hair

**hirsutism** /'hɜːsjuːtɪz(ə)m/ *noun* the condition of having excessive hair, especially a condition in which a woman grows hair on the body in the same way as a man

**hirudin** /hɪˈruːdɪn/ *noun* an anticoagulant substance produced by leeches, which is injected into the bloodstream while the leech is feeding on a body

**HIS** *abbreviation* Health Information Service

**hist-** /hɪst/ same as **histo-** (NOTE: used before vowels)

**histamine** /'hɪstəmiːn/ *noun* a substance released in response to allergens from mast cells throughout the body. Histamines dilate blood vessels, constrict the cells of smooth muscles and cause an increase in acid secretions in the stomach.

**histamine test** /'hɪstəmiːn test/ *noun* a test to determine the acidity of gastric juice

**histaminic** /,hɪstəˈmɪnɪk/ *adjective* referring to histamines

**histiocyte** /'hɪstɪəʊsaɪt/ *noun* a macrophage of the connective tissue, involved in tissue defence

**histiocytosis** /,hɪstɪəʊsaɪˈtəʊsɪs/ *noun* a condition in which histiocytes are present in the blood

**histiocytosis X** /,hɪstɪəʊsaɪˈtəʊsɪs ˈeks/ *noun* any form of histiocytosis where the cause is not known, e.g. Hand-Schüller-Christian disease

**histo-** /hɪstəʊ/ *prefix* relating to the body's tissue ○ *histology*

**histocompatible** /,hɪstəʊkəmˈpæɪtɪb(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to tissues from two individuals which have compatible antigens

**histogram** /'hɪstəgræm/ *noun* a way of displaying frequency values as columns whose height is proportional to the corresponding frequency ○ a *histogram showing numbers of patients with the condition in each age group*

**histological** /,hɪstəˈlɒdʒɪk(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to histology

**histological grade** /,hɪstəˈlɒdʒɪk(ə)l ˈɡreɪd/ *noun* a system of classifying tumours according to how malignant they are

**histology** /hɪˈstɒlədʒi/ *noun* the study of the anatomy of tissue cells and minute cellular structure

**histolysis** /hɪˈstɒləsɪs/ *noun* the disintegration of tissue

**histotoxic** /,hɪstəʊˈtɒksɪk/ *adjective* referring to a substance which is poisonous to tissue

**HIV** *abbreviation* human immunodeficiency virus

**hives** /haɪvz/ *noun* same as **urticaria** (NOTE: Takes a singular verb.)

**HIV-negative** /,eɪtʃ aɪ ˌviː ˈnegətɪv/ *adjective* referring to someone who has been tested and shown not to have HIV

**HIV-positive** /,eɪtʃ aɪ ˌviː ˈpɒzɪtɪv/ *adjective* referring to someone who has been tested and shown to have HIV

**HLA** *abbreviation* human leucocyte antigen

**HLA system** /,eɪtʃ el ˈeɪ ˌsɪstəm/ *noun* a system of HLA antigens on the surface of cells which need to be histocompatible to allow transplants to take place

**HMO** *abbreviation* US Health Maintenance Organization

**hobnail liver** /,hɒbnɛɪl ˈlɪvəl *noun* same as **atrophic cirrhosis**

**Hodgkin's disease** /ˈhɒdʒkɪnz dɪˌziːz/ *noun* a malignant disease in which the lymph glands are enlarged and there is an increase in the lymphoid tissues in the liver, spleen and bone marrow. It is frequently fatal if not treated early. [Described 1832. After Thomas Hodgkin (1798–1866), British physician.]



**hoist** /hɔɪst/ *noun* a device with pulleys and wires for raising a bed or a patient

**hole in the heart** /ˌhəʊl ɪn ðə 'hɑ:t/ *noun* same as **septal defect** (*informal*)

**holism** /'həʊlɪz(ə)m/ *noun* the theory that all of a person's physical, mental and social conditions should be considered in the treatment of his or her illness

**holistic** /həʊ'lɪstɪk/ *adjective* referring to a method of treatment involving all of someone's mental and family circumstances rather than just dealing with the condition from which he or she is suffering

**holistic care** /həʊ,lɪstɪk 'keə/ *noun* the care and treatment of a whole person rather than just of his or her medical symptoms

**holo-** /hɒləʊ/ *prefix* entire, complete

**holocrine** /'hɒləkrɪn/ *adjective* referring to a gland where the secretions are made up of disintegrated cells of the gland itself

**Homans' sign** /'həʊmənz saɪn/ *noun* pain in the calf when the foot is bent back, a sign of deep-vein thrombosis [Described 1941. After John Homans (1877–1954), Professor of Clinical Surgery at Harvard, USA.]

**home help** /,həʊm 'help/ *noun* **1.** a person who is paid to carry out ordinary domestic tasks such as cleaning and cooking for people who are unable to carry out these tasks for themselves **2.** same as **home help service**

**home help service** /,həʊm 'help ,sɜ:vɪs/ *noun* a publicly funded support service provided mainly for elderly and disabled people which offers help with ordinary household tasks of a non-nursing nature, such as cooking and washing to help people in their own homes

**homeo-** /həʊmiəʊ/ *prefix* like or similar

**homeopathic** /,həʊmiə'pæθɪk/, **homoeopathic** *adjective* **1.** referring to homeopathy ○ *a homeopathic clinic* ○ *She is having a course of homeopathic treatment.* **2.** referring to a drug which is given in very small quantities

**homeopathist** /,həʊmi'pəθɪst/, **homoeopathist** *noun* a person who practises homeopathy

**homeopathy** /,həʊmi'pəθi/, **homoeopathy** *noun* the treatment of a condition by giving the person very small quantities of a substance which, when given to a healthy person, would cause symptoms like those of the condition being treated. Compare **allopathy**

**homeostasis** /,həʊmiə'steɪsɪs/ *noun* the process by which the functions and chemistry of a cell or internal organ are kept stable, even when external conditions vary greatly

**homo-** /həʊməʊ/ *prefix* the same

**homoeo-** /həʊmiəʊ/ *prefix* another spelling of **homeo-** (*used before vowels*)

**homogenise** /hə'mɒdʒənaɪz/, **homogenize** *verb* to give something a uniform nature

**homograft** /'hɒməgrɑ:ft/ *noun* the graft of an organ or tissue from a donor to a recipient of the same species, e.g. from one person to another. Also called **allograft**. Compare **heterograft**

**homolateral** /,hɒmə'læt(ə)rəl/ *adjective* same as **ipsilateral**

**homologous** /hɒ'mɒləgəs/ *adjective* **1.** of the same type **2.** referring to chromosomes which form a pair

**homonymous hemianopia** /hə,mɒnɪməs ,hemɪə'nəʊpiə/ *noun* a condition in which the same half of the field of vision is lost in each eye

**homosexual** /,həʊməʊ'sekʃʊəl/ *adjective* referring to homosexuality ■ *noun* a person who is sexually attracted to people of the same sex. Compare **bisexual**, **heterosexual** (NOTE: Although **homosexual** can apply to both males and females, it is commonly used for males only, and **lesbian** is used for females.)

**homosexuality** /,həʊməʊ'sekʃʊ:ælɪti/ *noun* sexual attraction to people of the same sex or sexual relations with people of the same sex

**homozygous** /,həʊməʊ'zaɪgəs/ *adjective* having two identical versions of a specific gene. Compare **heterozygous**

**hookworm** /'hʊkwɜ:z/ *noun* a parasitic worm

**hookworm disease** /'hʊkwɜ:z m dɪ,zɪ:z/ *noun* ▶ **ancylostomiasis**

**hordeolum** /hɔ:'dɪ:ələm/ *noun* an infection of the gland at the base of an eyelash. Also called **stye**

**horizontal fissure** /,hɒrɪzɒnt(ə)l 'fɪʃə/ *noun* ANAT a horizontal groove between the superior and middle lobes of a lung. See illustration at **LUNGS** in Supplement

**hormone** /'hɔ:məʊn/ *noun* a substance which is produced by one part of the body, especially the endocrine glands and is carried to another part of the body by the bloodstream where it has particular effects or functions

**hormone replacement therapy** /,hɔ:məʊn rɪ'pleɪsmənt ,θerəpi/, **hormone therapy** *noun* **1.** treatment for someone whose endocrine glands have been removed **2.** treatment to relieve the symptoms of the menopause by supplying oestrogen and reducing the risk of osteoporosis ▶ abbreviation **HRT**

**Horner's syndrome** /'hɔ:nəz ,sɪndrəʊm/ *noun* a condition caused by paralysis of the sympathetic nerve in one side of the neck, making the eyelids hang down and the pupils contract [Described 1869. After Johann Friedrich Horner (1831–86), Professor of Ophthalmology in Zürich, Switzerland.]

**horny** /'hɔ:ni/ *adjective* referring to skin which is very hard (NOTE: For terms referring to horny tissue, see words beginning with **kerat-**, **kerato-**)

**horseshoe kidney** /ˌhɔːsfuː 'kɪdnɪ/ *noun* a congenital condition of the kidney, where sometimes the upper but usually the lower parts of both kidneys are joined together

**Horton's syndrome** /'hɔːt(ə)nz ˌsɪndrəm/ *noun* a severe headache, often with constant pain around one eye, which starts usually within a few hours of going to sleep. It is caused by the release of histamine in the body. [After Bayard Taylor Horton (1895–1980), US physician.]

**hospice** /'hɒspɪs/ *noun* a hospital which offers palliative care for terminally ill people

**hospital** /'hɒspɪt(ə)l/ *noun* a place where sick or injured people are looked after

**hospital-acquired infection** /ˌhɒspɪt(ə)l ə ˌkwɪrəd ɪn'fekʃən/ *noun* a disease caught during a stay in hospital

**Hospital Activity Analysis** /ˌhɒspɪt(ə)l æk 'tɪvɪtɪ ə ˌnæləsɪs/ *noun* a regular detailed report on patients in hospitals, including information about treatment, length of stay and outcome

**hospital care** /'hɒspɪt(ə)l keə/ *noun* treatment in a hospital

**hospital doctor** /ˌhɒspɪt(ə)l 'dɒktə/ *noun* a doctor who works only in a hospital and does not receive people in his or her own surgery

**hospital gangrene** /ˌhɒspɪt(ə)l ˌgæŋgrɪːn/ *noun* gangrene caused by insanitary hospital conditions

**hospital infection** /'hɒspɪt(ə)l ɪn'fekʃən/ *noun* an infection which someone gets during a hospital visit, or one which develops among hospital staff

COMMENT: Hospital infection is an increasingly common problem due to growing antimicrobial resistance and inappropriate antibiotic use. Strains of bacteria such as MRSA have evolved which seem to be more easily transmitted between patients and are difficult to treat.

**hospitalise** /'hɒspɪt(ə)laɪz/, **hospitalize** *verb* to send someone to hospital ○ *He is so ill that he has had to be hospitalised.*

**hospital trust** /'hɒspɪt(ə)l trʌst/ *noun* same as **self-governing hospital**

**host** /həʊst/ *noun* a person or animal on which a parasite lives

**hot** /hɒt/ *adjective* very warm or having a high temperature

**hot flush** /ˌhɒt 'flʌʃ/ *noun* a condition in menopausal women, in which the woman becomes hot and sweats, and which is often accompanied by redness of the skin

**hotpack** /'hɒtpæk/ *noun* a cloth bag or a pad filled with gel or grains which can be heated and applied to the skin to relieve pain or stiffness

**hourglass contraction** /'aʊəglɑːs kən ˌtrækʃən/ *noun* a condition in which an organ such as the stomach is constricted in the centre

**hourglass stomach** /'aʊəglɑːs ˌstʌmək/ *noun* a condition in which the wall of the stomach is pulled in so that it is divided into two cavities, cardiac and pyloric

**houseman** /'haʊsmən/ *noun* same as **house officer**

**house officer** /'haʊs ˌɒfɪsə/ *noun* a doctor who works in a hospital as a house surgeon or house physician during the final year of training before registration by the General Medical Council

**HPA** *abbreviation* Health Protection Agency

**HPRT** /ˌeɪtʃ piː ɑː 'tiː/ *noun* an enzyme that is lacking in children, usually boys, who have Lesch-Nyhan disease. Full form **hypoxanthine phosphoribosyl transferase**. Also called **HGPRT (hypoxanthine guanine phosphoribosyl transferase)**

**HPV** *abbreviation* human papillomavirus

**H pylori** *abbreviation* Helicobacter pylori

**HRT** *abbreviation* hormone replacement therapy

**human** /'hjuːmən/ *adjective* referring to any man, woman or child ■ *noun* a person ○ *Most animals are afraid of humans.*

**human anatomy** /ˌhjuːmən ə'nætəmi/ *noun* the structure, shape and functions of the human body

**human being** /ˌhjuːmən 'biːɪŋ/ *noun* a person

**human chorionic gonadotrophin** /ˌhjuːmən kɔːrɪˌnɒɪk ˌɡɒnədə'trəʊfɪn/ *noun* a hormone produced by the placenta, which suppresses the mother's usual menstrual cycle during pregnancy. It is found in the urine during pregnancy, and can be given by injection to encourage ovulation and help a woman to become pregnant. *Abbreviation* **HCG**

**human crutch** /ˌhjuːmən 'krʌtʃ/ *noun* a method of helping an injured person to walk, where they rest one arm over the shoulders of the person helping

**human immunodeficiency virus** /ˌhjuːmən ɪmˌjʊnəʊdɪ'fɪʃ(ə)nɪsɪ ˌvaɪrəs/ *noun* a virus which causes AIDS. *Abbreviation* **HIV**

**human leucocyte antigen** /ˌhjuːmən 'luːkəsaɪt ˌæntɪdʒ(ə)n/ *noun* any of the system of antigens on the surface of cells which need to be histocompatible to allow transplants to take place. *Abbreviation* **HLA**. ⇨ **HLA system**

**human nature** /ˌhjuːmən ˌneɪtʃə/ *noun* the general behavioural characteristics of human beings

**human papillomavirus** /ˌhjuːmən ˌpæpɪ ˌləʊmə ˌvaɪrəs/ *noun* a virus that causes genital warts in humans. *Abbreviation* **HPV**

**humectant** /hjuː'mektənt/ *adjective* able to absorb or retain moisture ■ *noun* a substance that can absorb or retain moisture, e.g. a skin lotion

**humeroulnar joint** /ˈhju:mərəʊˈʌlnə dʒɔɪnt/ *noun* part of the elbow joint, where the trochlea of the humerus and the trochlear notch of the ulna move next to each other

**humerus** /ˈhju:mərəs/ *noun* the top bone in the arm, running from the shoulder to the elbow (NOTE: The plural is **humeri**.)

**humoral** /ˈhju:mərəl/ *adjective* relating to human body fluids, in particular blood serum

**humour** /ˈhju:mə/ *noun* a fluid in the body

**hunchback** /ˈhʌntʃbæk/ *noun* ▶ **kyphosis**

**hunger** /ˈhʌŋgə/ *noun* a need to eat

**hunger pains** /ˈhʌŋgə peɪns/ *plural noun* pains in the abdomen when a person feels hungry, sometimes a sign of a duodenal ulcer

**Hunter's syndrome** /ˈhʌntəz ˌsɪndrəʊm/ *noun* an inherited disorder caused by an enzyme deficiency, which leads to learning difficulties

**Huntington's chorea** /ˌhʌntɪŋtənz kəˈri:ə/ *noun* a progressive hereditary disease which affects adults, where the outer layer of the brain degenerates and the person makes involuntary jerky movements and develops progressive dementia [Described 1872. After George Sumner Huntington (1850–1916), US physician.]

**Hurler's syndrome** /ˈhɜ:ləz ˌsɪndrəʊm/ *noun* same as **gargoylism** [Described 1919. After Gertrud Hurler (1889–1965), German paediatrician.]

**hurt** /hɜ:t/ *noun* **1.** emotional pain **2.** a painful area (used by children) ○ *She has a hurt on her knee.* ■ *verb* to have pain ○ *He's hurt his hand.* ■ *adjective* **1.** feeling physical pain ○ *He was slightly hurt in the car crash.* ○ *Two players got hurt in the football game.* **2.** feeling emotional pain ○ *Her parents' divorce hurt her deeply.*

**Hutchinson's teeth** /ˈhʌtʃɪnsənz ˌti:θ/, **Hutchinson's tooth** /ˈhʌtʃɪnsənz ˌtu:θ/ *plural noun* incisor teeth which are narrower than usual and have a crescent-shaped notch at the biting edge. They are seen especially in children with congenital syphilis, but can also occur naturally. (NOTE: takes either a singular or a plural verb)

**hyal-** /haɪəl/ *prefix* like glass (used before vowels)

**hyalin** /ˈhaɪəlɪn/ *noun* a transparent substance produced from collagen and deposited around blood vessels and scars when some tissues degenerate

**hyaline** /ˈhaɪəlɪn/ *adjective* nearly transparent like glass

**hyaline cartilage** /ˌhaɪəlɪn ˈkɑ:tɪlɪdʒ/ *noun* a type of cartilage found in the nose, larynx and joints. It forms most of the skeleton of the fetus. See illustration at **CARTILAGINOUS JOINT** in Supplement

**hyaline membrane disease** /ˌhaɪəlɪn ˈmembreɪn dɪˌzi:z/ *noun* same as **respiratory distress syndrome**

**hyalitis** /ˌhaɪəˈlaɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the vitreous humour or the hyaloid membrane in the eye. Also called **vitritis**

**hyaloid membrane** /ˈhaɪələɪd ˌmembreɪn/ *noun* a transparent membrane round the vitreous humour in the eye

**hybrid** /ˈhaɪbrɪd/ *noun* an organism that is a result of a cross between individuals that are not genetically the same as each other

**HYCOSY** *abbreviation* hysterosalpingo-contrast sonography

**hydatid** /ˈhaɪdətɪd/ *noun* any cyst-like structure

**hydatid cyst** /ˌhaɪdətɪd ˈsɪst/ *noun* the larval form of the tapeworms of the genus *Echinococcus*

**hydatid disease** /ˈhaɪdətɪd dɪˌzi:z/, **hydatidosis** /ˌhaɪdətɪˈdəʊsɪs/ *noun* an infection, usually in the lungs or liver, caused by expanding hydatid cysts that destroy the tissues of the infected organ

**hydatid mole** /ˌhaɪdətɪd ˈməʊl/ *noun* an abnormal pregnancy from a pathologic ovum, resulting in a mass of cysts shaped like a bunch of grapes

**hydr-** /haɪdr/ *prefix* same as **hydro-** (used before vowels)

**hydraemia** /haɪˈdri:miə/ *noun* an excess of water in the blood

**hydralazine** /haɪˈdræləzi:n/ *noun* a drug that lowers blood pressure. People usually receive it in combination with other drugs that increase the output of urine.

**hydramnios** /haɪˈdræmniəs/ *noun* an unusually large amount of amniotic fluid surrounding the fetus

**hyarthrosis** /ˌhaɪdrə:ˈθəʊsɪs/ *noun* swelling caused by excess synovial liquid at a joint

**hydrate** /ˈhaɪdreɪt/ *verb* to give water to someone so as to re-establish or maintain fluid balance ■ *noun* a chemical compound containing water molecules that can usually be driven off by heat without altering the compound's structure

**hydro-** /haɪdrəʊ/ *prefix* referring to water

**hydroa** /haɪˈdrəʊə/ *noun* an eruption of small itchy blisters, e.g. those caused by sunlight

**hydrocalycosis** /ˌhaɪdrəʊˌkæliˈkəʊsɪs/ *noun* same as **caliectasis**

**hydrocele** /ˈhaɪdrəʊsi:l/ *noun* the collection of watery liquid found in a cavity such as the scrotum

**hydrocephalus** /ˌhaɪdrəʊˈkefələs/ *noun* an excessive quantity of cerebrospinal fluid in the brain

**hydrochloric acid** /ˌhaɪdrəklorɪk ˈæsɪd/ *noun* an acid found in the gastric juices which helps to break apart the food

**hydrocortisone** /ˌhaɪdrəʊˈkɔ:rtɪzəʊn/ *noun* a steroid hormone secreted by the adrenal cortex or produced synthetically, used in the treatment of

rheumatoid arthritis and inflammatory and allergic conditions

**hydrogen** /'haɪdrədʒən/ *noun* a chemical element, a gas which combines with oxygen to form water, and with other elements to form acids, and is present in all animal tissue (NOTE: The chemical symbol is H.)

**hydrogen peroxide** /,haɪdrədʒən pə'rɒksaɪd/ *noun* a solution used as a disinfectant

**hydrolysis** /haɪ'drɒləsɪs/ *noun* the breaking down of a chemical compound when it reacts with water to produce two or more different compounds, as in the conversion of starch to glucose

**hydroma** /haɪ'drəʊmə/ *noun* same as **hygroma**

**hydrometer** /haɪ'drɒmɪtə/ *noun* an instrument which measures the density of a liquid

**hydromyelia** /,haɪdrəʊmaɪ'i:lɪə/ *noun* a condition in which fluid swells the central canal of the spinal cord

**hydronephrosis** /,haɪdrəʊne'frəʊsɪs/ *noun* swelling of the pelvis of a kidney caused by accumulation of water due to infection or a kidney stone blocking the ureter

**hydropericarditis** /,haɪdrəʊ,pərɪkə:'dɑɪtɪs/,  
**hydropericardium** /,haɪdrəʊ,pərɪ'kɑ:dɪəm/ *noun* an accumulation of liquid round the heart

**hydroperitoneum** /,haɪdrəʊ,pərɪtə'ni:əm/ *noun* a build-up of fluid in the peritoneal cavity (NOTE: The plural is **hydroperitoneums** or **hydroperitonea**.)

**hydrophobia** /,haɪdrə'fəʊbiə/ *noun* same as **rabies**

**hydroperitoneum** /,haɪdrəʊ ,nju:məʊ,pərɪtə'ni:əm/ *noun* a condition in which watery fluid and gas collect in the peritoneal cavity

**hydroperneumothorax** /,haɪdrəʊ,nju:məʊ 'θɔ:ræks/ *noun* a condition in which watery fluid and gas collect in the pleural cavity (NOTE: The plural is **hydroperneumothoraxes** or **hydroperneumothoraces**.)

**hydrops** /'haɪdrɒps/ *noun* same as **oedema** (NOTE: The plural is **hydropses**.)

**hydrosalpinx** /,haɪdrəʊ'sælpɪŋks/ *noun* an occasion when watery fluid collects in one or both of the Fallopian tubes, causing swelling (NOTE: The plural is **hydrosalpinges**.)

**hydrotherapy** /,haɪdrəʊ'θerəpi/ *noun* a type of physiotherapy involving treatment in water, where people are put in hot baths or are encouraged to swim

**hydrothorax** /,haɪdrəʊ'θɔ:ræks/ *noun* the collection of liquid in the pleural cavity

**hydrotubation** /,haɪdrəʊtju:'beɪf(ə)n/ *noun* an act of putting a fluid through the neck of the uterus and the Fallopian tubes under pressure to check whether the tubes are blocked

**hydroureter** /,haɪdrəʊju'rɪtə/ *noun* a condition in which water or urine collect in the ureter because it is blocked

**hygiene** /'haɪdʒi:n/ *noun* the procedures and principles designed to keep things clean and to keep conditions healthy ○ *Nurses have to maintain a strict personal hygiene.*

**hygienist** /'haɪdʒɪ:nɪst/ *noun* a person who specialises in hygiene and its application

**hygr-** /haɪgr/ *prefix* same as **hygro-** (used before vowels)

**hygro-** /haɪgrəʊ/ *prefix* relating to moisture

**hygroma** /haɪ'grəʊmə/ *noun* a kind of cyst which contains a thin fluid

**hymen** /'haɪmən/ *noun* a membrane which partially covers the vaginal passage in a female who has never had sexual intercourse

**hymenectomy** /,haɪmə'nektəmi/ *noun* 1. the surgical removal of the hymen, or an operation to increase the size of the opening of the hymen 2. the surgical removal of any membrane

**hymenotomy** /,haɪmə'nɒtəmi/ *noun* an incision of the hymen during surgery

**hyo-** /haɪəʊ/ *prefix* relating to the hyoid bone

**hyoglossus** /,haɪəʊ'glɒsəs/ *noun* a muscle which is attached to the hyoid bone and depresses the tongue

**hyoid** /haɪɔɪd/ *adjective* relating to the hyoid bone

**hyoid bone** /'haɪɔɪd bæʊn/ *noun* a small U-shaped bone at the base of the tongue

**hyoscine** /'haɪəʊsɪ:n/ *noun* a drug used as a sedative, in particular for treatment of motion sickness

**hyp-** /haɪp/ *prefix* same as **hypo-** (used before vowels)

**hypalgesia** /,haɪpəl'dʒɪ:ziə/ *noun* low sensitivity to pain

**hyper-** /haɪpə/ *prefix* higher or too much. Opposite **hypo-**

**hyperacidity** /,haɪpərə'sɪdɪti/ *noun* the production of more acid in the stomach than is usual. Also called **acidity**, **acid stomach**

**hyperacusia** /,haɪpərə'kju:ziə/ *noun* same as **hyperacusis**

**hyperactive** /,haɪpərə'æktɪv/ *adjective* very or unusually active

**hyperactivity** /,haɪpərə'æktɪvətɪ/ *noun* a condition in which something or someone, e.g. a gland or a child, is too active

**hyperacusis** /,haɪpərə'kju:sɪs/ *noun* a condition in which someone is very sensitive to sounds

**hyperadrenalism** /,haɪpərə'dri:n(ə)lɪz(ə)m/ *noun* a disorder in which too many adrenal hormones are produced, e.g. because of pituitary gland malfunction, a tumour of the adrenal gland or high doses of steroids

**hyperaemia** /,haɪpə'ri:miə/ *noun* excess blood in any part of the body

**hyperaesthesia** /,haɪpəri:s'ti:ziə/ *noun* an extremely high sensitivity in the skin

**hyperalgesia** /,haɪpərel'dʒi:ziə/ *noun* an increased sensitivity to pain

**hyperalimentation** /,haɪpər,ælimen'teɪf(ə)n/ *noun* the feeding of large amounts of nutrients by mouth or intravenously to someone with serious nutritional deficiency

**hyperandrogenism** /,haɪpə'reɪn'dʒənɪz(ə)m/ *noun* a condition in which a woman produces too many androgens, associated with many problems such as hirsutism, acne, infertility and polycystic ovarian disease

**hyperbaric** /,haɪpə'bærɪk/ *adjective* referring to a treatment in which someone is given oxygen at high pressure, used to treat carbon monoxide poisoning

**hypercalcaemia** /,haɪpəkæl'si:miə/ *noun* an excess of calcium in the blood

**hypercalcinuria** /,haɪpəkælsɪ'njʊəriə/ *noun* a condition in which an unusually high amount of calcium occurs in the urine

**hypercapnia** /,haɪpə'kæpniə/ *noun* an unusually high concentration of carbon dioxide in the bloodstream

**hypercatabolism** /,haɪpəkə'tæbəlɪz(ə)m/ *noun* a condition in which the body breaks down its own tissues or a particular substance too much. It causes weight loss and wasting.

**hyperchloraemia** /,haɪpəklo:'ri:miə/ *noun* a condition in which there is too much chloride in the blood

**hyperchlorhydria** /,haɪpəklo:'haɪdriə/ *noun* an excess of hydrochloric acid in the stomach

**hyperdactylism** /,haɪpə'dæktɪlɪz(ə)m/ *noun* the condition of having more than the usual number of fingers or toes. Also called **polydactylism**

**hyperemesis** /,haɪpər'emɪsɪs/ *noun* excessive vomiting (NOTE: The plural is **hyperemeses**.)

**hyperemesis gravidarum** /,haɪpər'emɪsɪs'grævɪ'deərəm/ *noun* uncontrollable vomiting in pregnancy

**hyperextension** /,haɪpərɪk'stenʃən/ *noun* the act of stretching an arm or leg beyond its usual limits of movement

**hyperflexion** /,haɪpə'flekʃən/ *noun* the act of flexing a joint beyond the usual limit ○ *a hyperflexion injury*

**hypergalactia** /,haɪpəgə'læktɪə/, **hypergalactosis** /,haɪpə,gælək'təʊsɪz/ *noun* a condition in which too much milk is secreted

**hyperglycaemia** /,haɪpəglai'si:miə/ *noun* an excess of glucose in the blood

**hyperhidrosis** /,haɪpə'haɪ'drəʊsɪs/ *noun* a condition in which too much sweat is produced

**hyperinsulinism** /,haɪpər'ɪnsjʊlɪnɪz(ə)m/ *noun* the reaction of a diabetic to an excessive dose of insulin or to hypoglycaemia

**hyperkalaemia** /,haɪpəkæ'li:miə/ *noun* a condition in which too much potassium occurs in the blood, which can result in cardiac arrest. Various possible causes include kidney failure and chemotherapy.

**hyperkeratosis** /,haɪpəkərə'təʊsɪs/ *noun* a condition in which the outer layer of the skin becomes unusually thickened

**hyperkinesia** /,haɪpəkɪ'ni:ziə/ *noun* a condition in which there is unusually great strength or movement

**hyperlipidaemia** /,haɪpəlɪpɪ'di:miə/ *noun* the pathological increase of the amount of lipids, or fat, in the blood

**hypermetropia** /,haɪpəmi'trəʊpiə/, **hyperopia** /,haɪpə'rəʊpiə/ *noun* a condition in which someone sees more clearly objects which are a long way away, but cannot see objects which are close. Also called **longsightedness**, **hyperopia**

**hypernatraemia** /,haɪpənæ'tri:miə/ *noun* a serious condition occurring most often in babies or elderly people, in which too much sodium is present in the blood as a result of loss of water and electrolytes through diarrhoea, excessive sweating, not drinking enough or excessive salt intake

**hypernephroma** /,haɪpənə'frəʊmə/ *noun* same as **Grawitz tumour**

**hyperopia** /,haɪpə'rəʊpiə/ *noun* same as **hypermetropia**

**hyperostosis** /haɪpəɪ'stəʊsɪs/ *noun* excessive overgrowth on the outside surface of a bone, especially the frontal bone

**hyperparathyroidism** /,haɪpə,pærə'θaɪrɔɪdɪz(ə)m/ *noun* an unusually high concentration of parathyroid hormone in the body. It causes various medical problems including damage to the kidneys.

**hyperphagia** /,haɪpə'feɪdʒiə/ *noun* long-term compulsive overeating

**hyperpiesia** /,haɪpəpaɪ'i:ziə/ *noun* same as **hypertension**

**hyperpituitarism** /,haɪpə'pɪtju:ɪtərɪz(ə)m/ *noun* a condition in which the pituitary gland is overactive

**hyperplasia** /,haɪpə'pleɪziə/ *noun* a condition in which there is an increase in the number of cells in an organ

**hyperpyrexia** /,haɪpəpaɪ'reksɪə/ *noun* a body temperature of above 41.1°C

**hypersecretion** /,haɪpəsɪ'kri:f(ə)n/ *noun* a condition in which too much of a substance is secreted

**hypersensitive** /,haɪpə'sensɪtɪv/ *adjective* referring to a person who reacts more strongly than usual to an antigen

**hypersensitivity** /,haɪpəsensɪ'tɪvɪti/ *noun* a condition in which someone reacts very strongly to something such as an allergic substance ○ *her hypersensitivity to dust* ○ *Anaphylactic shock shows hypersensitivity to an injection.*

**hypersplenism** /,haɪpə'splɛnɪz(ə)m/ *noun* a condition in which too many red blood cells are destroyed by the spleen, which is often enlarged

**hypertelorism** /,haɪpə'teləɪz(ə)m/ *noun* a condition in which there is too much space between two organs or parts of the body

**hypertension** /,haɪpə'tɛnʃən/ *noun* arterial blood pressure that is higher than the usual range for gender and age. Also called **high blood pressure**, **hyperpiesia**. Compare **hypotension**

**hypertensive** /,haɪpə'tensɪv/ *adjective* referring to high blood pressure

**hypertensive headache** /,haɪpətensɪv 'hedeɪk/ *noun* a headache caused by high blood pressure

**hyperthermia** /,haɪpə'tɜ:miə/ *noun* a very high body temperature

**hyperthyroidism** /,haɪpə'thaɪɔɪdɪz(ə)m/ *noun* a condition in which the thyroid gland is too active and releases unusual amounts of thyroid hormones into the blood, giving rise to a rapid heartbeat, sweating and trembling. It can be treated with carbimazole. Also called **thyrotoxicosis**

**hypertonia** /,haɪpə'təʊniə/ *noun* an increased rigidity and spasticity of the muscles

**hypertonic** /,haɪpə'tɒnɪk/ *adjective* **1.** referring to a solution which has a higher osmotic pressure than another specified solution **2.** referring to a muscle which is under unusually high tension

**hypertrichosis** /,haɪpə'trɪ'kəʊsɪs/ *noun* a condition in which someone has excessive growth of hair on the body or on part of the body

**hypertrophic** /,haɪpə'trɒfɪk/ *adjective* associated with hypertrophy

**hypertrophy** /haɪ'pɜ:trəfi/ *noun* an increase in the number or size of cells in a tissue

**hyperventilation** /,haɪpə'ventɪ'leɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* very fast breathing which can be accompanied by dizziness or tetany

**hypervitaminosis** /,haɪpə,vɪtəmɪ'nəʊsɪs/ *noun* a condition caused by taking too many synthetic vitamins, especially Vitamins A and D

**hypervolaemia** /,haɪpəvɔ'li:mɪə/ *noun* a condition in which there is too much plasma in the blood

**hyphaema** /haɪ'fi:mɪə/ *noun* bleeding into the front chamber of the eye

**hypn-** /hɪpn/ *prefix* referring to sleep

**hypnosis** /hɪp'nəʊsɪs/ *noun* a state like sleep, but caused artificially, where a person can remem-

ber forgotten events in the past and will do whatever the hypnotist tells him or her to do

**hypnotherapy** /,hɪpnəʊ'therəpi/ *noun* treatment by hypnosis, used in treating some addictions

**hypnotic** /hɪp'nɒtɪk/ *adjective* **1.** relating to hypnosis and hypnotism **2.** referring to a state which is like sleep but which is caused artificially **3.** referring to a drug which causes sleep

**hypnotism** /'hɪpnətɪz(ə)m/ *noun* the techniques used to induce hypnosis

**hypo** /'haɪpəʊ/ *noun (informal)* **1.** same as **hypodermic syringe** **2.** an attack of hypoglycaemia, experienced, e.g., by people who are diabetic

**hypo-** /haɪpəʊ/ *prefix* less, too little or beneath

**hypoaesthesia** /,haɪpəʊɪs'ti:ziə/ *noun* a condition in which someone has a diminished sense of touch

**hypocalcaemia** /,haɪpəʊkæl'si:mɪə/ *noun* an unusually low amount of calcium in the blood, which can cause tetany

**hypocapnia** /,haɪpəʊ'kæpniə/ *noun* a condition in which there is not enough carbon dioxide in the blood

**hypochloraemia** /,haɪpəʊklɔ:'ri:mɪə/ *noun* a condition in which there are not enough chlorine ions in the blood

**hypochlorhydria** /,haɪpəʊklɔ:'haɪdriə/ *noun* a condition in which there is not enough hydrochloric acid in the stomach

**hypochondria** /,haɪpəʊ'kɒndriə/ *noun* a condition in which a person is too worried about his or her own health and believes he or she is ill

**hypochondriac** /,haɪpəʊ'kɒndriæk/ *noun* a person who worries about his or her health too much

**hypochondriac region** /,haɪpəʊ'kɒndriæk ,ri:dʒən/ *noun* one of two parts of the upper abdomen, on either side of the epigastrium below the floating ribs

**hypochondrium** /,haɪpəʊ'kɒndriəm/ *noun* one of the two hypochondriac regions in the upper part of the abdomen

**hypochromic** /,haɪpəʊ'krəʊmɪk/ *adjective* referring to blood cells or body tissue which do not have the usual amount of pigmentation ○ *hypochromic scars*

**hypodermic** /,haɪpə'dɜ:mɪk/ *adjective* beneath the skin ■ *noun* a hypodermic syringe, needle or injection (*informal*)

**hypodermic injection** /,haɪpə'dɜ:mɪk ɪn 'dʒɛkʃən/ *noun* an injection of a liquid, e.g. a painkilling drug, beneath the skin. Also called **subcutaneous injection**

**hypodermic needle** /,haɪpə'dɜ:mɪk 'ni:d(ə)l/ *noun* a needle for injecting liquid under the skin

**hypodermic syringe** /,haɪpədɜ:mɪk sɪ 'rɪndʒ/ *noun* a syringe fitted with a hypodermic needle for injecting liquid under the skin

**hypofibrinogenaemia** /,haɪpəʊ,fɪbrɪnəʊdʒə 'ni:mɪə/ *noun* a condition in which there is not enough fibrinogen in the blood, e.g. because of several blood transfusions or as an inherited condition

**hypogammaglobulinaemia** /,haɪpəʊgæmə ,glɒbjʊlɪn'i:mɪə/ *noun* an unusually low concentration of gamma globulin in the blood that causes an immune deficiency. It may be present from birth or acquired later in life.

**hypogastrium** /,haɪpə'gæstriəm/ *noun* the part of the abdomen beneath the stomach

**hypoglossal** /,haɪpəʊ'glɒsəl/ *adjective* 1. underneath or on the lower side of the tongue 2. relating to the hypoglossal nerve

**hypoglossal nerve** /haɪpə'glɒs(ə)l 'nɜ:v/ *noun* the twelfth cranial nerve which governs the muscles of the tongue

**hypoglycaemia** /,haɪpəʊglai'si:mɪə/ *noun* a low concentration of glucose in the blood

**hypoglycaemic** /,haɪpəʊglai'si:mɪk/ *adjective* having hypoglycaemia

**hypoglycaemic coma** /,haɪpəʊglai'si:mɪk 'kəʊmə/ *noun* a state of unconsciousness affecting diabetics after taking an overdose of insulin

**hypohidrosis** /,haɪpəʊhaɪ'drəʊsɪs/, **hypoidrosis** /,haɪpəʊɪ'drəʊsɪs/ *noun* a condition in which someone produces too little sweat

**hypoinsulinism** /,haɪpəʊ'ɪnsjʊlɪnɪz(ə)m/ *noun* a condition in which the body does not have enough insulin, often because of a problem with the pancreas

**hypokalaemia** /,haɪpəʊkæ'li:mɪə/ *noun* a deficiency of potassium in the blood

**hypomania** /,haɪpəʊ'meɪniə/ *noun* a state of mild mania or overexcitement, especially when part of a manic-depressive cycle

**hypometropia** /,haɪpəʊmɪ'trəʊpiə/ *noun* same as **myopia**

**hyponatraemia** /,haɪpəʊnæ'tri:mɪə/ *noun* a lack of sodium in the body

**hypoparathyroidism** /,haɪpəʊ,pærə 'θaɪrɔɪdɪz(ə)m/ *noun* a condition in which the parathyroid glands do not secrete enough parathyroid hormone, leading to low blood calcium and muscle spasms

**hypopharynx** /,haɪpəʊ'færɪŋks/ *noun* the part of the pharynx between the hyoid bone and the bottom of the cricoid cartilage (NOTE: The plural is **hypopharynxes** or **hypopharynges**.)

**hypophyseal** /,haɪpə'fɪziəl/ *adjective* referring to the pituitary gland

**hypophysectomy** /haɪ,pɒfɪ'sektəmi/ *noun* the surgical removal of the pituitary gland

**hypophysis cerebri** /haɪ,pɒfəsɪs 'serəbrɪ/ *noun* same as **pituitary gland**

**hypopiesis** /,haɪpəʊpaɪ'ɪ:sɪs/ *noun* a condition in which the blood pressure is too low

**hypopituitarism** /,haɪpəʊpɪ'tju:ɪtærɪz(ə)m/ *noun* a condition in which the pituitary gland is underactive

**hypoplasia** /,haɪpəʊ'pleɪziə/ *noun* a lack of development or incorrect formation of a body tissue or an organ

**hypoplastic left heart** /haɪpəʊ,p læstɪk left 'hɑ:t/ *noun* a serious heart disorder in which the left side of the heart does not develop properly, leading to death within six weeks of birth unless surgery is performed

**hypoproteinaemia** /,haɪpəʊprəʊtɪ'nɪ:mɪə/ *noun* a condition in which there is not enough protein in the blood

**hypoprothrombinaemia** /,haɪpəʊprəʊ ,θrɒmbɪ'nɪ:mɪə/ *noun* a condition in which there is not enough prothrombin in the blood, so that the person bleeds and bruises easily

**hypopyon** /,haɪpə'paɪən/ *noun* an accumulation of pus in the aqueous humour in the front chamber of the eye

**hyposensitive** /,haɪpəʊ'sensɪtɪv/ *adjective* being less sensitive than usual

**hypospadias** /,haɪpə'speɪdiəs/ *noun* a congenital condition of the wall of the male urethra or the vagina, so that the opening occurs on the under side of the penis or in the vagina. Compare **epispadias**

**hypostasis** /haɪ'pɒstəsɪs/ *noun* a condition in which fluid accumulates in part of the body because of poor circulation

**hypostatic** /,haɪpəʊ'stætɪk/ *adjective* referring to hypostasis

**hypostatic eczema** /,haɪpəʊstætɪk 'ekzɪmə/ *noun* same as **varicose eczema**

**hypostatic pneumonia** /,haɪpəʊstætɪk nju:'mɒniə/ *noun* pneumonia caused by fluid accumulating in the lungs of a bedridden person with a weak heart

**hyposthenia** /,haɪpəs'θi:niə/ *noun* a condition of unusual bodily weakness

**hypotension** /,haɪpəʊ'tenʃən/ *noun* a condition in which the pressure of the blood is unusually low. Also called **low blood pressure**. Compare **hypertension**

**hypotensive** /,haɪpə'tensɪv/ *adjective* having low blood pressure

**hypothalamic** /,haɪpəʊθə'læmɪk/ *adjective* referring to the hypothalamus

**hypothalamic hormone** /,haɪpəʊθə,læmɪk 'hɔ:məʊn/ *noun* same as **releasing hormone**

**hypothalamus** /,haɪpəʊ'θæləməs/ *noun* the part of the brain above the pituitary gland, which controls the production of hormones by the pitui-

tary gland and regulates important bodily functions such as hunger, thirst and sleep. See illustration at **BRAIN** in Supplement

**hypothalamus** /,haɪpəʊ'thælməs/ *noun* same as **hypothalamus** (NOTE: The plural is **hypothalamuses** or **hypothalmi**.)

**hypothenar** /haɪ'pθɪnə/ *adjective* referring to the soft fat part of the palm beneath the little finger

**hypothenar eminence** /haɪ,pθɪnə 'emɪnəns/ *noun* a lump on the palm beneath the little finger. Compare **thenar**

**hypothermia** /,haɪpəʊ'teɪzmɪə/ *noun* a reduction in body temperature below normal, for medical purposes taken to be below 35°C

**hypothesis** /haɪ'pθəzɪs/ *noun* a suggested explanation for an observation or experimental result, which is then refined or disproved by further investigation

**hypothyroidism** /,haɪpəʊ'thaɪrɔɪdɪz(ə)m/ *noun* underactivity of the thyroid gland

**hypotonia** /,haɪpəʊ'təʊniə/ *noun* reduced tone of the skeletal muscles

**hypotonic** /,haɪpəʊ'tɒnɪk/ *adjective* 1. showing hypotonia 2. referring to a solution with a lower osmotic pressure than plasma

**hypotrichosis** /,haɪpəʊ'trɪkəʊsɪs/ *noun* a condition in which less hair develops than usual. Compare **alopecia** (NOTE: The plural is **hypotrichoses**.)

**hypotropia** /,haɪpəʊ'trəʊpiə/ *noun* a form of squint where one eye looks downwards

**hypoventilation** /,haɪpəʊventɪ'leɪf(ə)n/ *noun* very slow breathing

**hypovitaminosis** /,haɪpəʊ,vɪtə'mɪ'nəʊsɪs/ *noun* a lack of vitamins

**hypoxaemia** /,haɪpɒk'sɪmiə/ *noun* an inadequate supply of oxygen in the arterial blood

**hypoxanthine phosphoribosyl transferase** /,haɪpəʊzænθi:n ,fɒsfə'rɪbəsil ,trænsfərəsɪs/ *noun* full form of **HPRT**

**hypoxia** /haɪ'pɒksɪə/ *noun* 1. an inadequate supply of oxygen to tissue as a result of a lack of oxygen in the arterial blood 2. same as **hypoxaemia**

**hyster-** /hɪstə/ *prefix* same as **hystero-** (used before vowels)

**hysteralgia** /,hɪstə'rældʒə/ *noun* pain in the uterus

**hysterectomy** /,hɪstə'rektəmi/ *noun* the surgical removal of the uterus, often either to treat cancer or because of the presence of fibroids

**hysteria** /hɪ'stɪəriə/ *noun* a term formerly used in psychiatry, but now informally used for a condition in which the person appears unstable, and may scream and wave their arms about, but also is repressed, and may be slow to react to outside stimuli (*dated*)

**hysterical** /hɪ'sterɪk(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to a reaction showing hysteria (*informal*)

**hysterics** /hɪ'sterɪks/ *noun* an attack of hysteria (*dated*)

**hystero-** /hɪstərəʊ/ *prefix* referring to the uterus

**hystero-oophorectomy** /,hɪstərəʊ ,əʊfə'rektəmi/ *noun* the surgical removal of the uterus, the uterine tubes and the ovaries

**hysteroptosis** /,hɪstərp'təʊsɪs/ *noun* prolapse of the uterus

**hysterosalpingo-contrast sonography** /,hɪstərəʊ,sælpɪŋgəʊ ,kɒntrə:st sɒn'ɒgrəfi/ *noun* examination of the uterus and Fallopian tubes by ultrasound. Abbreviation **HYCOSY**

**hysterosalpingography** /,hɪstərəʊ,sælpɪŋ'gɒgrəfi/ *noun* an X-ray examination of the uterus and Fallopian tubes following injection of radio-opaque material. Also called **uterosalpingography**

**hysterosalpingosonography** /,hɪstərəʊ ,sælpɪŋgəʊsə'nɒgrəfi/ *noun* examination of the uterus and Fallopian tubes by ultrasound

**hysterosalpingostomy** /,hɪstərəʊ,sælpɪŋ'gɒstəmi/ *noun* an operation to remake an opening between the uterine tube and the uterus, to help with infertility problems

**hysteroscope** /'hɪstərəskəʊp/ *noun* a tube for inspecting the inside of the uterus

**hysteroscopy** /,hɪstə'rɒskəpi/ *noun* an examination of the uterine cavity using a hysteroscope or fibrescope

**hysterotomy** /,hɪstə'rɒtəmi/ *noun* a surgical incision into the uterus, as in caesarean section or for some types of abortion

**hysterotrachelorrhaphy** /,hɪstərəʊ,trækɪə'lɒrəfi/ *noun* an operation to repair a tear in the cervix



**-iasis** /aɪəʊsɪs/ *suffix* disease caused by something ○ *amoebiasis*

**iatro-** /aɪætrəʊ/ *prefix* relating to medicine or doctors

**iatrogenesis** /aɪætrəʊ'dʒenəsɪs/ *noun* any condition caused by the actions of doctors or other healthcare professionals

**iatrogenic** /aɪætrəʊ'dʒenɪk/ *adjective* referring to a condition which is caused by a doctor's treatment for another disease or condition ○ *an iatrogenic infection*

**IBS** *abbreviation* irritable bowel syndrome

**ibuprofen** /,aɪbju:'prəʊfən/ *noun* a nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug that relieves pain and swelling, especially in arthritis and rheumatism. It is also widely used as a household painkiller.

**ice pack** /'aɪs pæk/ *noun* a cold compress made of lumps of ice wrapped in a cloth, and pressed on a swelling or bruise to reduce the pain

**ichthamol** /ɪk'thæmɒl/ *noun* a thick dark red liquid which is a mild antiseptic and analgesic, used in the treatment of skin diseases

**ichthyosis** /,ɪkθɪ'əʊsɪs/ *noun* a hereditary condition in which the skin does not form properly, resulting in a dry, non-inflammatory and scaly appearance

**ICM** *abbreviation* International Confederation of Midwives

**ICN** *abbreviation* 1. International Council of Nurses 2. infection control nurse

**ICP** *abbreviation* intracranial pressure

**ICRC** *abbreviation* International Committee of the Red Cross

**ICSH** *abbreviation* interstitial cell stimulating hormone

**icteric** /ɪk'terɪk/ *adjective* referring to someone with jaundice

**icterus** /'ɪktərəs/ *noun* same as **jaundice**

**icterus gravis neonatorum** /,ɪktərəs ,grævɪs ,ni:əʊnə'tɔ:ɹəm/ *noun* jaundice associated with erythroblastosis fetalis

**ictus** /'ɪktəs/ *noun* a stroke or fit

**ICU** *abbreviation* intensive care unit

**id** /ɪd/ *noun* (in Freudian psychology) the basic unconscious drives which exist in hidden forms in a person

**ideation** /,aɪdɪ'eɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the act or process of imagining or forming thoughts and ideas

**identical twins** /aɪ,dentɪk(ə)l 'twɪnz/ *plural noun* twins who are exactly the same in appearance because they developed from the same ovum. Also called **monozygotic twins**, **uniovular twins**

**identification** /aɪ,dentɪfɪ'keɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the act of discovering or stating who someone is or what something is

**ideo-** /aɪdiəʊ/ *prefix* involving ideas

**idio-** /aɪdiəʊ/ *prefix* referring to one particular person

**idiopathic** /,ɪdɪə'pæθɪk/ *adjective* referring to idiopathy

**idiopathic epilepsy** /,ɪdɪə'pæθɪk 'epɪ,lepsi/ *noun* epilepsy not caused by a brain disorder, beginning during childhood or adolescence

**idiopathy** /,ɪdɪ'pəθi/ *noun* a condition which develops without any known cause

**idiosyncrasy** /,ɪdɪəʊ'sɪŋkrəsi/ *noun* a way of behaving which is particular to one person

**idiot savant** /,ɪdɪəʊ 'sævnəŋ/ *noun* a person with learning difficulties who also possesses a single particular mental ability, such as the ability to play music by ear, to draw remembered objects or to do mental calculations, which is very highly developed

**idioventricular** /,ɪdɪəʊven'trɪkjʊlə/ *adjective* relating to the ventricles of the heart

**idioventricular rhythm** /,ɪdɪəʊven, trɪkjʊlə 'rɪð(ə)m/ *noun* a slow natural rhythm in the ventricles of the heart, but not in the atria

**IDK** *abbreviation* internal derangement of the knee

**Ig** *abbreviation* immunoglobulin

**Ig A antiendomysial antibody** /,aɪ dʒi: eɪ ,æntiendəʊ,maɪsɪəl 'æntɪbɒdi/ *noun* a serological screening test for coeliac disease

**IHD** *abbreviation* ischaemic heart disease

**IL-1** *abbreviation* interleukin-1

**IL-2** *abbreviation* interleukin-2

**ile-** /ɪli/ *prefix* same as **ileo-** (used before vowels)

**ileal** /'ɪliəl/ *adjective* referring to the ileum

**ileal bladder** /,ɪliəl 'blædə/, **ileal conduit** /,ɪliəl 'kɒndjuɪt/ *noun* an artificial tube formed when the ureters are linked to part of the ileum, and that part is linked to an opening in the abdominal wall

**ileal pouch** /,ɪliəl 'paʊtʃ/ *noun* a part of the small intestine which is made into a new rectum in a surgical operation, freeing someone from the need for an ileostomy after their colon is removed

**ileectomy** /,ɪli'ektəmi/ *noun* the surgical removal of all or part of the ileum

**ileitis** /,ɪli'aɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the ileum

**ileo-** /ɪliəʊ/ *prefix* relating to the ileum

**ileocaecal** /,ɪliəʊ'si:k(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to the ileum and the caecum

**ileocaecal orifice** /,ɪliəʊsi:k(ə)l 'ɒrɪfɪs/ *noun* an opening where the small intestine joins the large intestine

**ileocaecal valve** /,ɪli:əʊsi:k(ə)l 'vælv/ *noun* a valve at the end of the ileum, which allows food to pass from the ileum into the caecum

**ileocaecocystoplasty** /,ɪliəʊ'si:kəʊ 'saɪtəʊplæsti/ *noun* an operation to reconstruct the bladder using a piece of the combined ileum and caecum

**ileocolic** /,ɪliəʊ'kɒlɪk/ *adjective* referring to both the ileum and the colon

**ileocolic artery** /,ɪli:əʊkɒlɪk 'ɑ:təri/ *noun* a branch of the superior mesenteric artery

**ileocolitis** /,ɪli:əʊkə'lɑɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of both the ileum and the colon

**ileocolostomy** /,ɪli:əʊkə'lɒstəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to make a link directly between the ileum and the colon

**ileoproctostomy** /,ɪli:əʊprɒk'tɒstəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to create a link between the ileum and the rectum

**ileorectal** /,ɪliəʊ'rekt(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to both the ileum and the rectum

**ileosigmoidostomy** /,ɪli:əʊsɪgmɔɪ'dɒstəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to create a link between the ileum and the sigmoid colon

**ileostomy** /,ɪli'bɒstəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to make an opening between the ileum and the abdominal wall to act as an artificial opening for excretion of faeces

**ileostomy bag** /,ɪli'bɒstəmi bæɡ/ *noun* a bag attached to the opening made by an ileostomy, to collect faeces as they are passed out of the body

**ileum** /'ɪliəm/ *noun* the lower part of the small intestine, between the jejunum and the caecum. Compare **ilium**. See illustration at **DIGESTIVE SYSTEM** in Supplement (NOTE: The plural is **ileae**.)

**ileus** /'ɪliəs/ *noun* obstruction of the intestine, usually distension caused by loss of muscular action in the bowel. † **paralytic ileus**

**ili-** /ɪli/ *prefix* same as **ilio-** (used before vowels)

**iliac** /'ɪliæk/ *adjective* referring to the ilium

**iliac crest** /,ɪliæk 'krest/ *noun* a curved top edge of the ilium. See illustration at **PELVIS** in Supplement

**iliac fossa** /,ɪliæk 'fɒsə/ *noun* a depression on the inner side of the hip bone

**iliac region** /'ɪliæk ,ri:dʒən/ *noun* one of two regions of the lower abdomen, on either side of the hypogastrium

**iliac spine** /'ɪliæk spɑɪn/ *noun* a projection at the posterior end of the iliac crest

**ilio-** /ɪliəʊ/ *prefix* relating to the ilium

**iliococcygeal** /,ɪliəʊkɒk'sɪdʒiəl/ *adjective* referring to both the ilium and the coccyx

**iliumbar** /,ɪliəʊ'λɪmbəl/ *adjective* referring to the iliac and lumbar regions

**iliopectineal** /,ɪliəʊpek'tɪniəl/ *adjective* referring to both the ilium and the pubis

**iliopectineal eminence** /,ɪliəʊpektɪniəl 'emɪnəns/ *noun* a raised area on the inner surface of the innominate bone

**iliopubic** /,ɪliəʊ'pju:bɪk/ *adjective* same as **iliopectineal**

**iliopubic eminence** /,ɪliəʊ,pju:bɪk 'emɪnəns/ *noun* same as **iliopectineal eminence**

**ilium** /'ɪliəm/ *noun* the top part of each of the hip bones, which form the pelvis. Compare **ileum**. See illustration at **PELVIS** in Supplement (NOTE: The plural is **ilia**.)

**ill** /ɪl/ *adjective* not well ○ *If you feel very ill you ought to see a doctor.*

**illness** /'ɪlnəs/ *noun* **1.** a state of not being well ○ *Most of the children stayed away from school because of illness.* **2.** a type of disease ○ *Scarlet fever is no longer considered to be a very serious illness.* ○ *He is in hospital with an infectious tropical illness.*

**illusion** /ɪ'lu:ʒ(ə)n/ *noun* a condition in which a person has a wrong perception of external objects

**i.m., IM** *abbreviation* intramuscular

**image** /'ɪmɪdʒ/ *noun* a sensation, e.g. a smell, sight or taste, which is remembered clearly

**imagery** /'ɪmɪdʒəri/ *noun* visual sensations clearly produced in the mind

**imaginary** /ɪ'mædʒɪn(ə)ri/ *adjective* referring to something which does not exist but is imagined

**imagination** /ɪ,mædʒɪ'neɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the ability to see or invent things in your mind ○ *In her imagination she saw herself sitting on a beach in the sun.*

**imagine** /ɪ'mædʒɪn/ *verb* to see, hear or feel something in your mind ○ *Imagine yourself sitting on the beach in the sun.* ○ *I thought I heard someone shout, but I must have imagined it because there is no one there.*

**imaging** /'ɪmɪdʒɪŋ/ *noun* a technique for creating pictures of sections of the body, using scanners attached to computers

**imbalance** /ɪm'bæləns/ *noun* a situation in which things are unequal or in the wrong proportions to one another, e.g. in the diet

**imipramine** /'ɪmɪprəmi:n/ *noun* a drug that is used as a treatment for depression

**immature** /ɪ,mə'tʃʊə/ *adjective* not mature, lacking insight and emotional stability

**immature cell** /ɪ,mətʃʊə 'sel/ *noun* a cell which is still developing

**immaturity** /ɪ,mə'tʃʊərɪti/ *noun* behaviour which is lacking in maturity

**immobilisation** /ɪ,məʊbɪlaɪ'zeɪʃ(ə)n/, **immobilization** *noun* the act of preventing somebody or something from being able to move

**immobilise** /ɪ'məʊbɪlaɪz/, **immobilize** *verb* 1. to keep someone from moving 2. to attach a splint to a joint or fractured limb to prevent the bones from moving

**immune** /ɪ'mju:n/ *adjective* protected against an infection or allergic disease ○ *She seems to be immune to colds.* ○ *The injection should make you immune to yellow fever.*

**immune deficiency** /ɪ,mju:n dɪ'fɪʃ(ə)nsɪ/ *noun* a lack of immunity to a disease. † **AIDS**

**immune reaction** /ɪ'mju:n rɪ,ækfən/, **immune response** /ɪ'mju:n rɪ,spɒns/ *noun* a reaction of a body to an antigen

**immune system** /ɪ'mju:n ,sɪstəm/ *noun* a complex network of cells and cell products, which protects the body from disease. It includes the thymus, spleen, lymph nodes, white blood cells and antibodies.

**immunisation** /ɪ,mjʊnəɪ'zeɪʃ(ə)n/, **immunization** *noun* the process of making a person immune to an infection, either by injecting an antiserum, passive immunisation or by inoculation

**immunise** /'ɪmjʊnəɪz/, **immunize** *verb* to give someone immunity from an infection. † **vaccinate** (NOTE: You immunise someone **against** a disease.)

**immunity** /ɪ'mju:nɪti/ *noun* the ability to resist attacks of a disease because antibodies are produced ○ *The vaccine gives immunity to tuberculosis.*

**immuno-** /ɪmjʊnəʊ, ɪmjʊ:nəʊ/ *prefix* immune, immunity

**immunoassay** /ɪmjʊnəʊ'æseɪ/ *noun* a test for the presence and strength of antibodies

**immunocompetence** /ɪmjʊnəʊ 'kɒmpɪtəns/ *noun* the ability to develop an immune response following exposure to an antigen

**immunocompromised** /ɪmjʊnəʊ 'kɒmprəmaɪzd/ *adjective* not able to offer resistance to infection

**immunodeficiency** /ɪmjʊnəʊdɪ'fɪʃ(ə)nsɪ/ *noun* a lack of immunity to a disease

**immunodeficiency virus** /ɪmjʊnəʊdɪ'fɪʃ(ə)nsɪ ,vaɪrəs/ *noun* a retrovirus which attacks the immune system

**immunodeficient** /ɪmjʊnəʊdɪ'fɪʃ(ə)nt/ *adjective* lacking immunity to a disease ○ *This form of meningitis occurs in persons who are immunodeficient.*

**immunogenic** /ɪmjʊnəʊ'dʒenɪk/ *adjective* producing an immune response

**immunogenicity** /ɪmjʊnəʊdʒə'nɪsɪti/ *noun* the property which makes a substance able to produce an immune response in an organism

**immunoglobulin** /ɪmjʊnəʊ'glɒbjʊlɪn/ *noun* an antibody, a protein produced in blood plasma as protection against infection, the commonest being gamma globulin. Abbreviation **Ig** (NOTE: The five main classes are called: **immunoglobulin G, A, D, E and M** or **IgG, IgA, IgD, IgE and IgM.**)

**immunological** /ɪmjʊnə'lədʒɪk(ə)/ *adjective* referring to immunology

**immunologist** /ɪmjʊ'nɒlədʒɪst/ *noun* a specialist in immunology

**immunology** /ɪmjʊ'nɒlədʒi/ *noun* the study of immunity and immunology

**immunosuppressant** /ɪmjʊnəʊsə 'pres(ə)nt/ *noun* a drug used to act against the response of the immune system to reject a transplanted organ

**immunosuppression** /ɪmjʊnəʊsə 'preʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the suppression of the body's natural immune system so that it will not reject a transplanted organ

**immunosuppressive** /ɪmjʊnəʊsə'presɪv/ *noun* a drug used to counteract the response of the immune system to reject a transplanted organ ■ *adjective* counteracting the immune system

**immunotherapy** /ɪmjʊnəʊ'therəpi/ *noun* † **adoptive immunotherapy**

**immunotransfusion** /ɪmjʊnəʊtræns'fju:z(ə)n/ *noun* a transfusion of blood, serum or plasma containing immune bodies

**Imodium** /ɪ'məʊdiəm/ a trade name for loperamide hydrochloride

**impacted** /ɪm'pæktɪd/ *adjective* tightly pressed or firmly lodged against something

**impacted faeces** /ɪm.pæktɪd 'fi:si:z/ *plural noun* extremely hard dry faeces which cannot pass through the anus and have to be surgically removed

**impacted fracture** /ɪm.pæktɪd 'fræktʃə/ *noun* a fracture where the broken parts of the bones are pushed into each other

**impacted tooth** /ɪmˌpæktɪd 'tuːθ/ *noun* a tooth which is held against another tooth and so cannot grow normally

**impacted ureteric calculus** /ɪmˌpæktɪd ˌjʊərɪtərɪk 'kælkjʊləs/ *noun* a small hard mass of mineral salts which is lodged in a ureter

**impaction** /ɪmˌpækʃən/ *noun* a condition in which things are closely pressed together and cannot develop or move normally

**impair** /ɪmˌpeə/ *verb* to harm a sense or function so that it does not work properly

**impaired hearing** /ɪmˌpeəd 'hɪərɪŋ/ *noun* hearing which is not clear and sharp

**impaired vision** /ɪmˌpeəd 'vɪʒ(ə)n/ *noun* eyesight which is not fully clear

**impairment** /ɪmˌpeɪmənt/ *noun* a condition in which a sense or function is harmed so that it does not work properly ○ *His hearing impairment does not affect his work.* ○ *The impairment was progressive, but she did not notice that her eyesight was getting worse.*

**impalpable** /ɪmˌpælpəb(ə)l/ *adjective* not able to be felt when touched

**impediment** /ɪmˌpedɪmənt/ *noun* an obstruction

**imperforate** /ɪmˌpɜːf(ə)rət/ *adjective* without an opening

**imperforate anus** /ɪmˌpɜːf(ə)rət 'eɪnəs/ *noun* same as **proctatresia**

**imperforate hymen** /ɪmˌpɜːf(ə)rət 'haɪmən/ *noun* a membrane in the vagina which is missing the opening for the menstrual flow

**impermeable** /ɪmˌpɜːmiəb(ə)l/ *adjective* not allowing liquids or gases to pass through

**impetigo** /ɪmˌpɪ'taɪɡəʊ/ *noun* an irritating and very contagious skin disease caused by staphylococci, which spreads rapidly and is easily passed from one child to another, but can be treated with antibiotics

**implant** *noun* /ɪmˌplɑːnt/ something grafted or inserted into a person, e.g. tissue, a drug, inert material or a device such as a pacemaker ■ *verb* /ɪmˌplɑːnt/ **1.** to fix into something ○ *The ovum implants in the wall of the uterus.* **2.** to graft or insert tissue, a drug, inert material or a device ○ *The site was implanted with the biomaterial.*

**implantation** /ɪmˌplɑːn'teɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* **1.** the act of grafting or inserting tissue, a drug, inert material or a device into a person, or the introduction of one tissue into another surgically **2.** a place in or on the body where an implant is positioned **3.** same as **nidation**

**implant site** /ɪmˌplɑːnt saɪt/ *noun* a place in or on the body where the implant is positioned

**implosion** /ɪmˌpləʊʒ(ə)n/ *noun* the violent inward collapse of a hollow structure. It happens when the pressure outside the structure is greater than the pressure inside it.

**impotence** /'ɪmpət(ə)ns/ *noun* the inability in a male to have an erection or to ejaculate, and so have sexual intercourse

**impotent** /'ɪmpət(ə)nt/ *adjective* (of a man) unable to have sexual intercourse

**impregnate** /'ɪmpregneɪt/ *verb* **1.** to make a female pregnant **2.** to soak a cloth with a liquid ○ *a cloth impregnated with antiseptic*

**impregnation** /ɪmpregˈneɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the action of impregnating

**impression** /ɪmˌpreʃ(ə)n/ *noun* **1.** a mould of a person's jaw made by a dentist before making a denture **2.** a depression on an organ or structure into which another organ or structure fits

**impulse** /'ɪmpʌls/ *noun* **1.** a message transmitted by a nerve **2.** a sudden feeling of wanting to act in a specific way

**in-** /ɪn/ *prefix* **1.** in, into, towards **2.** not

**inaccessible** /ɪnəkˈsesɪb(ə)l/ *adjective* **1.** physically difficult or impossible to reach **2.** very technical and difficult to understand

**inanition** /ɪnəˈnɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a state of exhaustion caused by starvation

**inarticulate** /ɪnɑː'tɪkjʊlət/ *adjective* **1.** without joints or segments, as in the bones of the skull **2.** unable to speak fluently or intelligibly **3.** not understandable as speech or language

**in articulo mortis** /ɪn ɑː'tɪkjʊləʊ 'mɔːtɪs/ *adverb* a Latin phrase meaning 'at the onset of death'

**inborn** /ɪnˈbɔːn/ *adjective* congenital, which is in the body from birth ○ *A body has an inborn tendency to reject transplanted organs.*

**inbreeding** /'ɪnbriːdɪŋ/ *noun* a situation where closely related males and females, or those with very similar genetic make-up, have children together, so allowing congenital conditions to be passed on

**incapacitated** /ɪnkeɪˈpæsɪteɪtɪd/ *adjective* not able to act or work ○ *He was incapacitated for three weeks by his accident.*

**incarcerated** /ɪnˈkɑːsəreɪtɪd/ *adjective* referring to a hernia which cannot be corrected by physical manipulation

**inception rate** /ɪnˈsepʃən reɪt/ *noun* the number of new cases of a disease during a period of time, per thousand of population

**incest** /'ɪnsest/ *noun* an act of sexual intercourse or other sexual activity with so close a relative, that it is illegal or culturally not allowed

**incidence** /'ɪnsɪd(ə)ns/ *noun* the number of times something happens in a specific population over a period of time ○ *the incidence of drug-related deaths* ○ *Men have a higher incidence of strokes than women.*

**incidence rate** /'ɪnsɪd(ə)ns reɪt/ *noun* the number of new cases of a disease during a given period, per thousand of population

**incipient** /ɪn'sɪpiənt/ *adjective* just beginning or in its early stages ○ *He has an incipient appendicitis.* ○ *The tests detected incipient diabetes mellitus.*

**incision** /ɪn'sɪʒ(ə)n/ *noun* a cut in a person's body made by a surgeon using a scalpel, or any cut made with a sharp knife or razor ○ *The first incision is made two millimetres below the second rib.* Compare **excision**

**incisional** /ɪn'sɪʒ(ə)n(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to an incision

**incisional hernia** /ɪn,sɪʒ(ə)n(ə)l 'hɜ:niə/ *noun* a hernia which breaks through the abdominal wall at a place where a surgical incision was made during an operation

**incisor** /ɪn'saɪzə/, **incisor tooth** /ɪn'saɪzə tu:θ/ *noun* one of the front teeth, of which there are four each in the upper and lower jaws, which are used to cut off pieces of food. See illustration at **TEETH** in Supplement

**inclusion** /ɪn'klu:ʒ(ə)n/ *noun* something enclosed inside something else

**inclusion bodies** /ɪn'klu:ʒ(ə)n ,bɒdiz/ *plural noun* very small particles found in cells infected by a virus

**inclusive** /ɪn'klu:sɪv/ *adjective* (of health services) provided whether or not someone has a disability or special needs

**incompatibility** /ɪn,kəmpeɪtɪ'bɪlɪti/ *noun* the fact of being incompatible ○ *the incompatibility of the donor's blood with that of the patient*

**incompatible** /ɪn,kəm'pæɪtəb(ə)l/ *adjective* **1.** referring to something which does not go together with something else **2.** referring to drugs which must not be used together because they undergo chemical change and the therapeutic effect is lost or changed to something undesirable **3.** referring to tissue which is genetically different from other tissue, making it impossible to transplant into that tissue

**incompatible blood** /ɪn,kəmpeɪtəb(ə)l 'blʌd/ *noun* blood from a donor that does not match the blood of the person receiving the transfusion

**incompetence** /ɪn,kɒmpɪt(ə)ns/ *noun* the inability to do a particular act, especially a lack of knowledge or skill which makes a person unable to do particular job

**incompetent cervix** /ɪn,kɒmpɪt(ə)nt 'sɜ:vɪks/ *noun* a dysfunctional cervix of the uterus which is often the cause of spontaneous abortions and premature births and can be remedied by purse-string stitching

**incomplete abortion** /ɪn,kəmplɪ:t ə 'bɔ:ʃ(ə)n/ *noun* an abortion where part of the contents of the uterus is not expelled

**incontinence** /ɪn'kɒntɪnəns/ *noun* the inability to control the discharge of urine or faeces (NOTE: Single incontinence is the inability to con-

trol the bladder. Double incontinence is the inability to control both the bladder and the bowels.)

**incontinence pad** /ɪn'kɒntɪnəns pæd/ *noun* a pad of material to absorb urine

**incontinent** /ɪn'kɒntɪnənt/ *adjective* unable to control the discharge of urine or faeces

**incoordination** /ɪn,kəʊdɪ:neɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a situation in which the muscles in various parts of the body do not act together, making it impossible to carry out some actions

**incubation** /ɪn,kju'beɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* **1.** the development of an infection inside the body before the symptoms of the disease appear **2.** the keeping of an ill or premature baby in a controlled environment in an incubator **3.** the process of culturing cells or microorganisms under controlled conditions

**incubation period** /ɪn,kju'beɪʃ(ə)n ,pɪəriəd/ *noun* the time during which a virus or bacterium develops in the body after contamination or infection, before the appearance of the symptoms of the disease. Also called **stadium invasioni**

**incubator** /ɪn'kjubeɪtə/ *noun* **1.** an apparatus for growing bacterial cultures **2.** an enclosed container in which a premature baby can be kept, within which conditions such as temperature and oxygen levels can be controlled

**incurable** /ɪn'kjʊərəb(ə)l/ *adjective* who or which cannot be cured ○ *He is suffering from an incurable disease of the blood.* ■ *noun* a patient who will never be cured ○ *She has been admitted to a hospital for incurables.*

**incus** /ɪŋkəs/ *noun* one of the three ossicles in the middle ear, shaped like an anvil. See illustration at **EAR** in Supplement

**independent** /ɪn'dɪpəndənt/ *adjective* not controlled by someone or something else

**independent nursing function** /ɪn'dɪpəndənt 'nɜ:ɪŋ ,ɪn'kʃən/ *noun* any part of the nurse's job for which the nurse takes full responsibility

**Inderal** /ɪndərəl/ a trade name for propranolol

**index finger** /ɪndeks ,ɪŋgə/ *noun* the first finger next to the thumb

**indication** /ɪn'dɪ'keɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a situation or sign which suggests that a specific treatment should be given or that a condition has a particular cause ○ *Sulpha drugs have been replaced by antibiotics in many indications.* † **contraindication**

**indicator** /ɪndɪkətə/ *noun* **1.** a substance which shows something, e.g. a substance secreted in body fluids which shows which blood group a person belongs to **2.** something that serves as a warning or guide

**indigenous** /ɪn'dɪdʒɪnəs/ *adjective* **1.** natural or inborn **2.** native to or representative of a country or region

**indigestion** /ɪn'dɪ'dʒestʃən/ *noun* a disturbance of the normal process of digestion, where

the person experiences pain or discomfort in the stomach ○ *He is taking tablets to relieve his indigestion* or *He is taking indigestion tablets.* † **dyspepsia**

**indigo carmine** /,ɪndɪɡəʊ 'kɑ:məɪn/ *noun* a blue dye which is injected into a person to test how well their kidneys are working

**indirect contact** /,ɪndə'rekt 'kɒntækt/ *noun* the fact of catching a disease by inhaling germs or by being in contact with a vector

**individualise** /,ɪndɪ'vɪdʒuə,ləɪz/, **individualize** *verb* to provide something that matches the needs of a specific person or situation ○ *individualised care*

**individualised nursing care** /,ɪndɪvɪdʒuə,ləɪzd 'nɜ:ɪŋ,keə/ *noun* care which is designed to provide exactly what one particular patient needs ○ *The home's staff are specially trained to provide individualised nursing care.*

**Indocid** /'ɪndəʊsɪd/ a trade name for indomethacin

**indolent** /'ɪndələnt/ *adjective* **1.** causing little pain **2.** referring to an ulcer which develops slowly and does not heal

**indomethacin** /,ɪndəʊ'meθəʊsɪn/ *noun* a drug that reduces pain, fever and inflammation, especially that caused by arthritis

**indrawn** /ɪn'drɔ:n/ *adjective* pulled inside

**induce** /ɪn'dju:z/ *verb* to make something happen

**induced abortion** /ɪn,dju:st ə'bɔ:ʃ(ə)n/ *noun* an abortion which is deliberately caused by drugs or by surgery

**induction** /ɪn'dʌkʃən/ *noun* **1.** the process of starting or speeding up the birth of a baby **2.** the stimulation of an enzyme's production when the substance on which it acts increases in concentration **3.** a process by which one part of an embryo influences another part's development **4.** information and support given to new employees in an organisation

**induction of labour** /ɪn,dʌkʃən əv 'leɪbəl/ *noun* the action of starting childbirth artificially

**induration** /,ɪndʒuə'reɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the hardening of tissue or of an artery because of pathological change

**industrial disease** /ɪn'dʌstriəl dɪ,zɪ:z/ *noun* a disease which is caused by the type of work done by a worker or by the conditions in which he or she works, e.g. by dust produced or chemicals used in the factory

**inebriation** /ɪ,nɪ:brɪ'eɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a state where a person is drunk, especially habitually drunk

**inertia** /ɪ'nɜ:ʃə/ *noun* a lack of activity in the body or mind

**in extremis** /ɪn ɪks'tri:mɪs/ *adverb* at the moment of death

**infant** /'ɪnfənt/ *noun* a child under two years of age

**infanticide** /ɪn'fæntɪsaɪd/ *noun* **1.** the act of killing an infant **2.** a person who kills an infant

**infantile** /'ɪnfəntaɪl/ *adjective* referring to small children

**infantile convulsions** /,ɪnfəntaɪl kən 'vʌlʃənz/, **infantile spasms** *plural noun* convulsions or minor epileptic fits in small children

**infantile paralysis** /,ɪnfəntaɪl pə'ræləʊsɪs/ *noun* a former name for poliomyelitis

**infantilism** /ɪn'fæntɪlɪz(ə)m/ *noun* a condition in which a person keeps some characteristics of an infant when he or she becomes an adult

**infant mortality rate** /,ɪnfənt mɔ:'tælɪtɪ ,reɪt/ *noun* the number of infants who die per thousand births

**infarct** /'ɪnfɑ:kt/ *noun* an area of tissue which is killed when the blood supply is cut off by the blockage of an artery

**infarction** /ɪn'fɑ:kʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a condition in which tissue is killed by the cutting off of the blood supply

**infect** /ɪn'fekt/ *verb* to contaminate someone or something with microorganisms that cause disease or toxins ○ *The disease infected her liver.* ○ *The whole arm soon became infected.*

**infected wound** /ɪn,fektɪd 'wu:nd/ *noun* a wound into which bacteria have entered

**infection** /ɪn'fekʃən/ *noun* **1.** the entry or introduction into the body of microorganisms, which then multiply ○ *As a carrier he was spreading infection to other people in the office.* **2.** an illness which is caused by the entry of microbes into the body ○ *She is susceptible to minor infections.*

**infectious** /ɪn'fekʃəs/ *adjective* referring to a disease which is caused by microorganisms and can be transmitted to other persons by direct means ○ *This strain of flu is highly infectious.* ○ *Her measles is at the infectious stage.*

**infectious disease** /ɪn,fekʃəs dɪ'zɪ:z/ *noun* a disease caused by microorganisms such as bacteria, viruses or fungi. † **communicable disease, contagious disease**

**infectious mononucleosis** /ɪn,fekʃəs ,mɒnəʊ,nju:klɪ'əʊsɪs/ *noun* an infectious disease where the body has an excessive number of white blood cells. Also called **glandular fever**

**infectious parotitis** /ɪn,fekʃəs ,pærə'taɪtɪs/ *noun* same as **mumps**

**infective** /ɪn'fektɪv/ *adjective* referring to a disease caused by a microorganism, which can be caught from another person but which may not always be directly transmitted

**inferior** /ɪn'fɪəriəl/ *adjective* referring to a lower part of the body. Opposite **superior**

**inferior aspect** /ɪn,fɪəriər 'æspekt/ *noun* a view of the body from below

**inferiority** /ɪn,fɪəri'brɪti/ *noun* the fact of being lower in value or quality, substandard

**inferiority complex** /ɪn,fɪəri'brɪti ,kɒmpleks/ *noun* a mental disorder arising from a combination of wanting to be noticed and fear of humiliation. The resulting behaviour may either be aggression or withdrawal from the external world.

**inferior mesenteric artery** /ɪn,fɪəriə meɪn ,terɪk 'ɑ:təri/ *noun* one of the arteries which supply the transverse colon and rectum

**inferior vena cava** /ɪn,fɪəriə ,vɪ:nə 'kɑ:və/ *noun* the main vein carrying blood from the lower part of the body to the heart. See illustration at **HEART** in Supplement, **KIDNEY** in Supplement

**infertility** /ɪn,fə'tɪlɪti/ *noun* the fact of not being fertile, not able to reproduce

**infestation** /ɪnfe'steɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the fact of having large numbers of parasites, or an invasion of the body by parasites ○ *The condition is caused by infestation of the hair with lice.*

**infiltrate** /ɪn'fɪltreɪt/ *verb* (of liquid or waste) to pass from one part of the body to another through a wall or membrane and be deposited in the other part ■ *noun* a substance which has infiltrated a part of the body

**infiltration** /ɪn,fɪl'treɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* 1. the process where a liquid passes through the walls of one part of the body into another part 2. a condition in which waste is brought to and deposited around cells

**infirm** /ɪn'fɜ:m/ *adjective* old and weak

**infirmary** /ɪn'fɜ:məri/ *noun* 1. a room in a school or workplace where people can go if they are ill 2. a former name for a hospital (NOTE: **Infirmary** is still used in the names of some hospitals: **the Glasgow Royal Infirmary.**)

**infirmity** /ɪn'fɜ:miti/ *noun* a lack of strength and energy because of illness or age (*formal*)

**inflamed** /ɪn'fleɪmd/ *adjective* sore, red and swollen ○ *The skin has become inflamed around the sore.*

**inflammation** /ɪnflə'meɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the fact of having become sore, red and swollen as a reaction to an infection, an irritation or a blow ○ *She has an inflammation of the bladder or a bladder inflammation.* ○ *The body's reaction to infection took the form of an inflammation of the eyelid.*

**inflammatory** /ɪn'flæmət(ə)ri/ *adjective* causing an organ or a tissue to become sore, red and swollen

**inflammatory bowel disease** /ɪn ,flæmət(ə)ri 'baʊəl dɪ,zɪ:z/ *noun* any condition, e.g. Crohn's disease, colitis or ileitis, in which the bowel becomes inflamed

**inflammatory response** /ɪn,flæmət(ə)ri rɪ 'spɒns/, **inflammatory reaction** /ɪn ,flæmət(ə)ri rɪ'ækʃən/ *noun* any condition where an organ or a tissue reacts to an external

stimulus by becoming inflamed ○ *She showed an inflammatory response to the ointment.*

**influenza** /ɪnflu'enzə/ *noun* an infectious disease of the upper respiratory tract with fever and muscular aches, which is transmitted by a virus and can occur in epidemics. Also called **flu**

**informed** /ɪn'fɔ:md/ *adjective* having the latest information

**informed consent** /ɪn,fɔ:md kən'sent/ *noun* an agreement to allow a procedure to be carried out, given by a patient, or the guardian of a patient, who has been provided with all the necessary information

**infra-** /ɪnfrə/ *prefix* below

**infrared** /ɪnfrə'red/ *adjective* relating to infrared radiation ■ *noun* invisible electromagnetic radiation between light and radio waves

**infrared rays** /ɪnfrə'red 'reɪz/ *plural noun* long invisible rays, below the visible red end of the colour spectrum, used to produce heat in body tissues in the treatment of traumatic and inflammatory conditions. ⇧ **light therapy**

**infundibulum** /ɪnfʌn'dɪbjʊləm/ *noun* any part of the body shaped like a funnel, especially the stem which attaches the pituitary gland to the hypothalamus

**infusion** /ɪn'fju:ʒ(ə)n/ *noun* 1. a drink made by pouring boiling water on a dry substance such as herb tea or a powdered drug 2. the process of putting of liquid into someone's body, using a drip

**ingesta** /ɪn'dʒestə/ *plural noun* food or liquid that enters the body via the mouth

**ingestion** /ɪn'dʒestʃən/ *noun* the act of taking in food, drink or medicine by the mouth

**ingrowing toenail** /ɪnɡrəʊɪŋ 'təʊneɪl/, **ingrowing nail** /ɪnɡrəʊɪŋ 'neɪl/, **ingrown toenail** /ɪnɡrəʊn 'təʊneɪl/ *noun* a toenail which is growing into the skin at the side of the nail, causing pain and swelling. The toenail cuts into the tissue on either side of it, creating inflammation and sometimes sepsis and ulceration.

**inguinal** /ɪŋɡwɪn(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to the groin

**inguinal canal** /ɪŋɡwɪn(ə)l kə'næɪl/ *noun* a passage in the lower abdominal wall, carrying the spermatic cord in the male and the round ligament of the uterus in the female

**inguinal hernia** /ɪŋɡwɪn(ə)l 'hɜ:niə/ *noun* a hernia where the intestine bulges through the muscles in the groin

**inguinal ligament** /ɪŋɡwɪn(ə)l 'lɪŋɡəmənt/ *noun* a ligament in the groin, running from the spine to the pubis. Also called **Poupart's ligament**

**inguinal region** /ɪŋɡwɪn(ə)l 'rɪ:dʒən/ *noun* the part of the body where the lower abdomen joins the top of the thigh. ⇧ **groin**

**inhalation** /ɪnhə'leɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* **1.** the act of breathing in. Opposite **exhalation** **2.** the action of breathing in a medicinal substance as part of a treatment **3.** a medicinal substance which is breathed in

**inhale** /ɪn'heɪl/ *verb* **1.** to breathe in, or breathe something in ○ *She inhaled some toxic gas fumes and was rushed to hospital.* **2.** to breathe in a medicinal substance as part of a treatment. Opposite **exhale**

**inhaler** /ɪn'heɪlə/ *noun* a small device for administering medicinal substances into the mouth or nose so that they can be breathed in

**inherent** /ɪn'hɪərənt/ *adjective* referring to a thing which is part of the essential character of a person or a permanent characteristic of an organism

**inherit** /ɪn'herɪt/ *verb* to receive genetically controlled characteristics from a parent ○ *She inherited her father's red hair.* ○ *Haemophilia is a condition which is inherited through the mother's genes.*

**inheritance** /ɪn'herɪt(ə)ns/ *noun* **1.** the process by which genetically controlled characteristics pass from parents to offspring ○ *the inheritance of chronic inflammatory bowel disease* **2.** all of the qualities and characteristics which are passed down from parents ○ *an unfortunate part of our genetic inheritance*

**inherited** /ɪn'herɪtɪd/ *adjective* passed on from a parent through the genes ○ *an inherited disorder of the lungs*

**inhibit** /ɪn'hɪbɪt/ *verb* to prevent an action happening, or stop a functional process ○ *Aspirin inhibits the clotting of blood.*

**inhibition** /ɪnhɪ'bɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* **1.** the action of blocking or preventing something happening, especially of preventing a muscle or organ from functioning properly **2.** (*in psychology*) the suppression of a thought which is associated with a sense of guilt **3.** (*in psychology*) the blocking of a spontaneous action by some mental influence

**inhibitor** /ɪn'hɪbɪtə/ *noun* a substance which inhibits

**inject** /ɪn'dʒekt/ *verb* to put a liquid into someone's body under pressure, by using a hollow needle inserted into the tissues ○ *He was injected with morphine.* ○ *She injected herself with a drug.*

**injected** /ɪn'dʒektɪd/ *adjective* **1.** referring to a liquid or substance introduced into the body **2.** referring to surface blood vessels which are swollen

**injection** /ɪn'dʒekʃən/ *noun* **1.** the act of injecting a liquid into the body ○ *He had a penicillin injection.* **2.** a liquid introduced into the body

**injury** /ɪndʒəri/ *noun* damage or a wound caused to a person's body ○ *His injuries required*

*hospital treatment.* ○ *He received severe facial injuries in the accident.*

**injury scoring system** /ɪndʒəri 'skɔ:ɪŋ ,sɪstəm/ *noun* any system used for deciding how severe an injury is ○ *a standard lung injury scoring system* Abbreviation **ISS**

**inlay** /ɪn'leɪ/ *noun* (*in dentistry*) a type of filling for teeth

**inlet** /ɪn'let/ *noun* a passage or opening through which a cavity can be entered

**innate** /ɪ'neɪt/ *adjective* inherited, which is present in a body from birth

**inner pleura** /ɪnə 'plʊərə/ *noun* same as **visceral pleura**

**innervation** /ɪnɜ: 'veɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the nerve supply to an organ, including both motor nerves and sensory nerves

**innocent** /ɪ'nəs(ə)nt/ *adjective* referring to a growth which is benign, not malignant

**innominate** /ɪ'nɒmɪnət/ *adjective* with no name

**innominate artery** /ɪnɒmɪnət 'ɑ:təri/ *noun* the largest branch of the arch of the aorta, which continues as the right common carotid and right subclavian arteries

**innominate bone** /ɪnɒmɪnət 'bəʊn/ *noun* same as **hip bone**

**innominate vein** /ɪnɒmɪnət 'veɪn/ *noun* same as **brachiocephalic vein**

**inoculate** /ɪ'nɒkjʊleɪt/ *verb* to introduce vaccine into a person's body in order to make the body create its own antibodies, so making the person immune to the disease ○ *The baby was inoculated against diphtheria.* (NOTE: You inoculate someone **with** or **against** a disease.)

**inoculation** /ɪnɒkjʊ'leɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the action of inoculating someone ○ *Has the baby had a diphtheria inoculation?*

**inoculum** /ɪ'nɒkjʊləm/ *noun* a substance used for inoculation, e.g. a vaccine (NOTE: The plural is **inocula**.)

**inoperable** /ɪn'ɒpərə(ə)b(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to a condition which cannot be operated on ○ *The surgeon decided that the cancer was inoperable.*

**inorganic** /ɪnɔ: 'gænɪk/ *adjective* referring to a substance which is not made from animal or vegetable sources

**inorganic acid** /ɪnɔ: 'gænɪk 'æsɪd/ *noun* an acid which comes from minerals, used in dilute form to help indigestion

**inotropic** /ɪnəʊ'trɒpɪk/ *adjective* affecting the way muscles contract, especially those of the heart

**inpatient** /ɪn'peɪʃ(ə)nt/ *noun* someone who stays overnight or for some time in a hospital for treatment or observation. Compare **outpatient**



**inquest** /'ɪŋkwɛst/ *noun* an inquiry by a coroner into the cause of a death

**insanitary** /ɪn'sænrɪ(ə)rɪ/ *adjective* not hygienic ○ *Cholera spread rapidly because of the insanitary conditions in the town.*

**insanity** /ɪn'sænrɪ/ *noun* a psychotic mental disorder or illness

**insect** /'ɪnsɛkt/ *noun* a small animal with six legs and a body in three parts

**insect bite** /'ɪnsɛkt baɪt/ *noun* a sting caused by an insect which punctures the skin to suck blood, and in so doing introduces irritants

COMMENT: Most insect bites are simply irritating. Others can be more serious, as insects can carry the organisms which produce typhus, sleeping sickness, malaria, filariasis and many other diseases.

**insecticide** /ɪn'sɛktɪsaɪd/ *noun* a substance which kills insects

**insemination** /ɪn'semɪ'neɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the fertilisation of an ovum by a sperm

**insensible** /ɪn'sɛnsɪb(ə)l/ *adjective* **1.** lacking feeling or consciousness **2.** not aware of or responding to a stimulus **3.** too slight to be perceived by the senses

**insertion** /ɪn'sɜːʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the point of attachment of a muscle to a bone

**insidious** /ɪn'sɪdiəs/ *adjective* causing harm without showing any obvious signs

**insidious disease** /ɪn,sɪdiəs dɪ'zɪːzɪ/ *noun* a disease which causes damage before being detected

**insight** /'ɪnsaɪt/ *noun* the ability of a person to realise that he or she is ill or has particular problems or characteristics

**in situ** /,ɪn 'sɪtjuː/ *adverb* in place

**insoluble** /ɪn'sɒljʊb(ə)l/ *adjective* not able to be dissolved in liquid

**insoluble fibre** /ɪn,sɒljʊb(ə)l 'faɪbə/ *noun* the fibre in bread and cereals, which is not digested but which swells inside the intestine

**insomnia** /ɪn'sɒmniə/ *noun* the inability to sleep ○ *She experiences insomnia.* ○ *What does the doctor give you for your insomnia?* Also called **sleeplessness**

**insomniac** /ɪn'sɒmniæk/ *noun* a person who has insomnia

**inspiration** /,ɪnspɪ'reɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the act of taking air into the lungs. Opposite **expiration**

**instep** /'ɪnstɛp/ *noun* an arched top part of the foot

**instillation** /,ɪnstɪ'leɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* **1.** the process of putting a liquid in drop by drop **2.** a liquid put in drop by drop

**instinct** /'ɪnstɪŋkt/ *noun* a tendency or ability which the body has from birth and does not need to learn ○ *The body has a natural instinct to protect itself from danger.*

**institution** /,ɪnstɪ'tjuːʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a place where people are cared for, e.g. a hospital or clinic, especially a psychiatric hospital or children's home

**institutionalisation** /,ɪnstɪ,tjuːʃ(ə)nəlaɪ'zeɪʃ(ə)n/, **institutionalization**, **institutional neurosis** /,ɪnstɪtjuːʃən(ə)l njuː'rəʊsɪs/ *noun* a condition in which someone has become so adapted to life in an institution that it is impossible for him or her to live outside it

**instrument** /'ɪnstɹʊmənt/ *noun* a piece of equipment or a tool ○ *The doctor had a box of surgical instruments.*

**instrumental delivery** /,ɪnstɹʊmənt(ə)l dɪ'ɪv(ə)rɪ/ *noun* childbirth where the doctor uses forceps to help the baby out of the mother's uterus

**insufficiency** /,ɪnsə'fɪʃ(ə)nsɪ/ *noun* the fact of not being strong or large enough to perform usual functions ○ *The patient is suffering from a renal insufficiency.*

**insufflation** /,ɪnsə'fleɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the act of blowing gas, vapour or powder into the lungs or another body cavity as a treatment

**insulin** /'ɪnsjʊlɪn/ *noun* a hormone produced by the islets of Langerhans in the pancreas

**insulinase** /'ɪnsjʊlɪneɪz/ *noun* an enzyme which breaks down insulin

**insulin dependence** /,ɪnsjʊlɪn dɪ'pendəns/ *noun* the fact of being dependent on insulin injections

**insulin-dependent diabetes** /,ɪnsjʊlɪn dɪ'pendənt ,daɪə'bɪtɪz/ *noun* same as **Type I diabetes mellitus**

**insulinoma** /,ɪnsjʊlɪ'nəʊmə/ *noun* a tumour in the islets of Langerhans

**insulin-resistant** /,ɪnsjʊlɪn rɪ'zɪst(ə)nt/ *adjective* referring to a condition in which the muscle and other tissue cells respond inadequately to insulin, as in Type II diabetes

**insuloma** /,ɪnsjʊ'ləʊmə/ *noun* same as **insulinoma**

**insult** /'ɪnsʌlt/ *noun* **1.** a physical injury or trauma **2.** something that causes a physical injury or trauma

**Intal** /'ɪntæl/ a trade name for a preparation of cromolyn sodium

**integrated service** /,ɪntɪgreɪtɪd 'sɜːvɪs/ *noun* a broad care service provided by health and social agencies acting together

**integrative medicine** /,ɪntɪgreɪtɪv 'med(ə)s(ə)n/ *noun* the combination of mainstream therapies and those complementary or alternative therapies for which there is scientific evidence of efficacy and safety

**integument** /ɪn'tegjʊmənt/ *noun* a covering layer, e.g. the skin

**intellect** /'ɪntɪlekt/ *noun* a person's ability to think, reason and understand

**intelligence** /ɪn'telɪdʒəns/ *noun* the ability to learn and understand quickly

**intelligence quotient** /ɪn'telɪdʒəns ,kwɔʊf(ə)nt/ *noun* the ratio of the mental age, as given by an intelligence test, to the chronological age of the person. Abbreviation **IQ**

**intensity** /ɪn'tensɪti/ *noun* the strength of e.g. pain

**intensive care** /ɪn,tensɪv 'keə/ *noun* **1.** the continual supervision and treatment of an extremely ill person in a special section of a hospital ○ *The patient was put in intensive care.* † **residential care 2.** same as **intensive care unit**

**intensive care unit** /ɪn,tensɪv 'keə ,ju:ɪt/ *noun* a section of a hospital equipped with life-saving and life-support equipment in which seriously ill people who need constant medical attention are cared for. Abbreviation **ICU**

**intention** /ɪn'tenʃən/ *noun* **1.** the healing process **2.** a plan to do something

**intention tremor** /ɪn'tenʃən ,tremə/ *noun* a trembling of the hands seen when people suffering from particular brain diseases make voluntary movements to try to touch something

**inter-** /ɪntə/ *prefix* between

**interaction** /ɪ,ɪntər'ækʃən/ *noun* an effect which two or more substances such as drugs have on each other

**interatrial septum** /ɪ,ɪntər'eɪtriəl ,septəm/ *noun* a membrane between the right and left atria in the heart

**intercalated** /ɪn'tɜ:kələɪtɪd/ *adjective* inserted between other tissues

**intercalated disc** /ɪn,tɜ:kələɪtɪd 'dɪsk/ *noun* closely applied cell membranes at the end of adjacent cells in cardiac muscle, seen as transverse lines

**intercellular** /ɪ,ɪntə'seljʊlə/ *adjective* between the cells in tissue

**intercostal** /ɪ,ɪntə'kɒst(ə)l/ *adjective* between the ribs ■ *noun* same as **intercostal muscle**

**intercostal muscle** /ɪntə,kɒst(ə)l 'mʌs(ə)l/ *noun* one of the muscles between the ribs

COMMENT: The intercostal muscles expand and contract the thorax, so changing the pressure in the thorax and making the person breathe in or out. There are three layers of intercostal muscle: external, internal and innermost or intercostalis intimis.

**intercurrent disease** /ɪ,ɪntəkʌrənt dɪ'zi:z/, **intercurrent infection** /ɪ,ɪntəkʌrənt ɪn'fekʃən/ *noun* a disease or infection which affects someone who has another disease

**interdigital** /ɪ,ɪntə'dɪdʒɪt(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to the space between the fingers or toes

**interdisciplinary** /ɪ,ɪntə,dɪsɪ'plɪnəri/ *adjective* combining two or more different areas of medical or scientific study

**interferon** /ɪ,ɪntə'fɪərən/ *noun* a protein produced by cells, usually in response to a virus, and which then reduces the spread of viruses

**interior** /ɪn'tɪəriəl/ *noun* a part which is inside ■ *adjective* inside

**interleukin** /ɪ,ɪntə'lu:kɪn/ *noun* a protein produced by the body's immune system

**interleukin-1** /ɪ,ɪntəlu:kɪn 'wʌn/ *noun* a protein which causes high temperature. Abbreviation **IL-1**

**interleukin-2** /ɪ,ɪntəlu:kɪn 'tu:/ *noun* a protein which stimulates T-cell production, used in the treatment of cancer. Abbreviation **IL-2**

**interlobar** /ɪ,ɪntə'ləʊbəl/ *adjective* between lobes

**interlobar artery** /ɪ,ɪntə'ləʊbər 'ɑ:təri/ *noun* an artery running towards the cortex on each side of a renal pyramid

**interlobular** /ɪntə'lɒbjʊlə/ *adjective* between lobules

**interlobular artery** /ɪntə'lɒbjʊlə 'ɑ:təri/ *noun* one of the arteries running to the glomeruli of the kidneys

**intermediate care** /ɪ,ɪntəmi:diət 'keə/ *noun* care following surgery or illness that can be delivered in special units attached to a hospital or in the person's home by a special multidisciplinary team

**intermittent** /ɪ,ɪntə'mɪt(ə)nt/ *adjective* occurring at intervals

**intermittent claudication** /ɪ,ɪntəmit(ə)nt ,klɔ:di'keɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a condition of the arteries causing severe pain in the legs which makes the person limp after having walked a short distance (NOTE: The symptoms increase with walking, stop after a short rest and recur when the person walks again.)

**intermittent fever** /ɪ,ɪntəmit(ə)nt 'fi:vəl/ *noun* fever which rises and falls regularly, as in malaria

**intermittent self-catheterisation** /ɪ,ɪntəmit(ə)nt self ,kæθɪtərərɪ'zeɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a procedure in which someone puts a catheter through the urethra into their own bladder from time to time to empty out the urine. Abbreviation **ISC**

**internal** /ɪn'tɜ:n(ə)l/ *adjective* inside the body or a body part

**internal auditory meatus** /ɪn,tɜ:n(ə)l ,ɔ:di:t(ə)rɪ mi'eɪtəs/ *noun* a channel which takes the auditory nerve through the temporal bone

**internal cardiac massage** /ɪn,tɜ:n(ə)l ,kɑ:diæk 'mæsə:dʒ/ *noun* a method of making the heart start beating again by pressing on the heart itself

**internal carotid** /ɪn,tɜ:n(ə)l kærɒtɪd/ *noun* an artery in the neck, behind the external carotid, which gives off the ophthalmic artery and ends by dividing into the anterior and middle cerebral arteries

**internal derangement of the knee** /ɪnˌtɜːn(ə)l dɪ'reɪnʒmənt əv ðə 'niː/ *noun* a condition in which the knee cannot function properly because of a torn meniscus. Abbreviation **IDK**

**internal ear** /ɪnˌtɜːn(ə)l 'iə/ *noun* the part of the ear inside the head, behind the eardrum, containing the semicircular canals, the vestibule and the cochlea

**internal haemorrhage** /ɪnˌtɜːn(ə)l 'hem(ə)rɪdʒ/ *noun* a haemorrhage which takes place inside the body

**internal haemorrhoids** /ɪnˌtɜːn(ə)l 'hemərɔɪdz/ *plural noun* swollen veins inside the anus

**internal iliac artery** /ɪnˌtɜːn(ə)l 'ɪliæk ,ɑːtəri/ *noun* an artery which branches from the aorta in the abdomen and leads to the pelvis

**internal injury** /ɪnˌtɜːn(ə)l 'ɪndʒəri/ *noun* damage to one of the internal organs

**internal jugular** /ɪnˌtɜːn(ə)l 'dʒʌgjulə/ *noun* the largest jugular vein in the neck, leading to the brachiocephalic veins

**internal nares** /ɪnˌtɜːn(ə)l 'neəriːz/ *plural noun* the two openings shaped like funnels leading from the nasal cavity to the pharynx. Also called **posterior nares**

**internal oblique** /ɪnˌtɜːn(ə)l ə'bliːk/ *noun* the middle layer of muscle covering the abdomen, beneath the external oblique

**internal respiration** /ɪnˌtɜːn(ə)l ,respɪ'reɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the part of respiration concerned with the passage of oxygen from the blood to the tissues, and the passage of carbon dioxide from the tissues to the blood

**International Committee of the Red Cross** /ɪntənəʃ(ə)n(ə)l kə'mɪtɪ əv ðə ,red 'krɒs/ *noun* an international organisation which provides mainly emergency medical help, but also relief to victims of earthquakes, floods and other disasters, or to prisoners of war. Abbreviation **ICRC**

**International Council of Nurses** /ɪntənəʃ(ə)n(ə)l ,kaʊnsəl əv 'nɜːsɪz/ *noun* an organisation founded in 1899 which now represents nurses in more than 120 countries. Its aims are to bring nurses together, to advance nursing worldwide and to influence health policies. Abbreviation **ICN**

**international unit** /ɪntənəʃ(ə)nəl 'juːnɪt/ *noun* an internationally agreed standard used in pharmacy as a measure of a substance such as a drug or hormone. Abbreviation **IU**

**internodal** /ɪntə'nəʊd(ə)l/ *adjective* between two nodes

**interosseous** /ɪntər'ɒsiəs/ *adjective* between bones

**interparietal** /ɪntəpə'raɪət(ə)l/ *adjective* between parietal parts, especially between the

parietal bones ■ *noun* same as **interparietal bone**

**interparietal bone** /ɪntəpə'raɪət(ə)l ,bəʊn/ *noun* a triangular bone in the back of the skull, rarely present in humans

**interphalangeal joint** /ɪntəfə'lændʒiəl ,dʒɔɪnt/ *noun* a joint between the phalanges. Also called **IP joint**

**interphase** /ɪntəfeɪz/ *noun* a stage of a cell between divisions

**interpubic joint** /ɪntəpjuːbɪk 'dʒɔɪnt/ *noun* a piece of cartilage which joins the two sections of the pubic bone. Also called **pubic symphysis**

**intersex** /ɪntəseks/ *noun* an organism that has both male and female characteristics

**intersexuality** /ɪntəseks'juːælɪti/ *noun* a condition in which a baby has both male and female characteristics, as in Klinefelter's syndrome and Turner's syndrome

**interstice** /ɪn'tɜːstɪs/ *noun* a small space between body parts or within a tissue

**interstitial** /ɪntə'stɪʃ(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to tissue located in the spaces between parts of something, especially between the active tissues in an organ

**interstitial cell** /ɪntə'stɪʃ(ə)l ,sel/ *noun* a testosterone-producing cell between the tubules in the testes. Also called **Leydig cell**

**interstitial cell stimulating hormone** /ɪntə'stɪʃ(ə)l sel 'stɪmjʊlətɪŋ ,hɔːmɒn/ *noun* a hormone produced by the pituitary gland which stimulates the formation of corpus luteum in females and testosterone in males. Abbreviation **ICSH**. Also called **luteinising hormone**

**interstitial cystitis** /ɪntə'stɪʃ(ə)l sɪ'staɪtɪs/ *noun* a persistent nonbacterial condition in which someone has bladder pain and wants to pass urine frequently. It is often associated with Hunner's ulcer.

**intertrigo** /ɪntə'traɪgəʊ/ *noun* an irritation which occurs when two skin surfaces rub against each other, as in the armpit or between the buttocks

**intertubercular plane** /ɪntətjuːbɜːkjʊlə 'pleɪn/ *noun* same as **transtubercular plane**

**intervention** /ɪntə'venʃən/ *noun* a treatment

**interventional radiology** /ɪntəvenʃən(ə)l ,reɪdɪ'nɒlədʒi/ *noun* the area of medicine which uses X-rays, ultrasound and CAT to guide small instruments into the body for procedures such as biopsies, draining fluids or widening narrow vessels

**interventricular** /ɪntəven'trɪkjʊlə/ *adjective* between ventricles in the heart or brain

**interventricular foramen** /ɪntəven'trɪkjʊlə fə'reɪmən/ *noun* an opening in the brain between the lateral ventricle and the third ventricle, through which the cerebrospinal fluid passes

**interventricular septum** /,ɪntə'ven,tri:kjələ 'septəm/ *noun* a membrane between the right and left ventricles in the heart

**intervertebral** /,ɪntə'vɜ:tɪbr(ə)l/ *adjective* between vertebrae

**intervertebral disc** /,ɪntə,vɜ:tɪbrəl 'dɪsk/ *noun* a round plate of cartilage which separates two vertebrae in the spinal column. See illustration at **CARTILAGINOUS JOINT** in Supplement. Also called **vertebral disc**

**intervertebral foramen** /,ɪntə,vɜ:tɪbrəl fə 'reɪmən/ *noun* a space between two vertebrae

**intestinal** /ɪn'testɪn(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to the intestine

**intestinal anastomosis** /ɪn,tɛstɪn(ə)l ə ,næstə'məʊsɪs/ *noun* a surgical operation to join one part of the intestine to another, after a section has been removed

**intestinal flora** /ɪn,tɛstɪn(ə)l 'flɔ:rə/ *plural noun* beneficial bacteria which are always present in the intestine

**intestinal glands** /ɪn'testɪn(ə)l glændz/ *plural noun* tubular glands found in the mucous membrane of the small and large intestine, especially those between the bases of the villi in the small intestine. Also called **Lieberkühn's glands, crypts of Lieberkühn**

**intestinal obstruction** /ɪn,tɛstɪn(ə)l əb 'strʌkʃən/ *noun* a blocking of the intestine

**intestinal villi** /ɪn,tɛstɪn(ə)l 'vɪlə/ *plural noun* projections on the walls of the intestine which help in the digestion of food

**intestinal wall** /ɪn,tɛstɪn(ə)l 'wɔ:l/ *noun* the layers of tissue which form the intestine

**intestine** /ɪn'testɪn/ *noun* the part of the digestive system between the stomach and the anus that digests and absorbs food. ♀ **large intestine, small intestine** (NOTE: For other terms referring to the intestines, see words beginning with **entero-**.)

**intima** /'ɪntɪmə/ ♦ **tunica intima**

**intolerance** /ɪn'tɒlərəns/ *noun* the fact of being unable to endure something such as pain or to take a medicine without an adverse reaction ○ *He developed an intolerance to penicillin.*

**intoxication** /ɪn,tɒksɪ'keɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a condition which results from the absorption and diffusion in the body of a substance such as alcohol ○ *She was driving in a state of intoxication.*

**intra-** /ɪntrə/ *prefix* inside

**intra-abdominal** /,ɪntrə'æb'dɒmɪn(ə)l/ *adjective* inside the abdomen

**intra-articular** /,ɪntrə ə'tɪkjələ/ *adjective* inside a joint

**intracellular** /,ɪntrə'seljələ/ *adjective* inside a cell

**intracerebral haematoma** /,ɪntrə,serəbrəl ,hi:mə'təʊmə/ *noun* a blood clot inside a cerebral hemisphere

**intracranial** /,ɪntrə'kreɪniəl/ *adjective* inside the skull

**intracranial pressure** /,ɪntrəkreɪniəl 'preʃə/ *noun* the pressure of the subarachnoidal fluid, which fills the space between the skull and the brain. Abbreviation **ICP**

**intractable** /ɪn'træktəb(ə)l/ *adjective* not able to be controlled ○ *an operation to relieve intractable pain*

**intracutaneous** /,ɪntrəkju:'teɪniəs/ *adjective* inside layers of skin tissue

**intracutaneous injection** /,ɪntrəkju:'teɪniəs ɪn'dʒekʃən/ *noun* an injection of a liquid between the layers of skin, as for a test for an allergy

**intra dermal test** /,ɪntrə'dɜ:m(ə)l ,test/ *noun* a test requiring an injection into the thickness of the skin, e.g. a Mantoux test or an allergy test

**intradural** /,ɪntrə'djuərəl/ *adjective* inside the dura mater

**intramedullary** /,ɪntrəme'dʌləri/ *adjective* inside the bone marrow or spinal cord

**intramural** /,ɪntrə'mjuərəl/ *adjective* inside the wall of an organ

**intramuscular** /,ɪntrə'maskjələ/ *adjective* inside a muscle

**intramuscular injection** /,ɪntrə,maskjələ ɪn 'dʒekʃən/ *noun* an injection of liquid into a muscle, e.g. for a slow release of a drug

**intranasal** /,ɪntrə'neɪz(ə)l/ *adjective* inside or into the nose

**intraocular** /,ɪntrə'ɒkjələ/ *adjective* inside the eye

**intraocular lens** /,ɪntrə,ɒkjələ 'lenz/ *noun* an artificial lens implanted inside the eye. Abbreviation **IOL**

**intraocular pressure** /,ɪntrə,ɒkjələ 'preʃə/ *noun* the pressure inside the eyeball (NOTE: If the pressure is too high, it causes glaucoma.)

**intraoperative ultrasound** /,ɪntrəɒpəreɪtɪv 'ʌltrəsaʊnd/ *noun* high-resolution imaging used in surgery. Abbreviation **IOUS**

**intraorbital** /,ɪntrə'ɔ:bɪt(ə)l/ *adjective* within the orbit of the eye

**intraosseous** /,ɪntrə'ɒsiəs/ *adjective* within a bone

**intrathecal** /,ɪntrə'θi:k(ə)l/ *adjective* inside a sheath, especially inside the intradural or subarachnoid space

**intratracheal** /,ɪntrətrə'kiəl/ *adjective* within the trachea. Also called **endotracheal**

**intrauterine** /,ɪntrə'ju:təraɪn/ *adjective* inside the uterus

**intrauterine contraceptive device** /,ɪntrə ju:təraɪn ,kɒntrə'septɪv dɪ,vʌsɪs/, **intrauterine**

**device** /,ɪntrəʃu:təreɪn dɪ'vaɪs/ *noun* a plastic coil placed inside the uterus to prevent pregnancy. Abbreviation **IUCD, IUD**

**intravascular** /,ɪntrə'væskjələ/ *adjective* inside the blood vessels

**intravenous** /,ɪntrə'vi:nəs/ *adjective* into a vein. Abbreviation **IV**

**intravenous drip** /,ɪntrəvi:nəs 'drɪp/ *noun* a thin tube that is inserted into a vein and is used to very gradually give a person fluids, either for rehydration, feeding or medication purposes

**intravenous feeding** /,ɪntrəvi:nəs 'fi:dɪŋ/ *noun* the procedure of giving someone liquid food by means of a tube inserted into a vein

**intravenous injection** /,ɪntrəvi:nəs ɪn 'dʒekʃən/ *noun* an injection of liquid into a vein, e.g. for the fast release of a drug

**intravenously** /,ɪntrə'vi:nəsli/ *adverb* into a vein ○ *a fluid given intravenously*

**intravenous pyelogram** /,ɪntrəvi:nəs 'paɪələgræm/, **intravenous urogram** /,ɪntrəvi:nəs 'juərəgræm/ *noun* a series of X-ray photographs of the kidneys using pyelography. Abbreviation **IVP**

**intravenous pyelography** /,ɪntrəvi:nəs 'paɪələgrəfi/, **intravenous urography** /,ɪntrəvi:nəs ju'rɒgrəfi/ *noun* an X-ray examination of the urinary tract after opaque liquid has been injected intravenously into the body and taken by the blood into the kidneys

**intraventricular** /,ɪntrə'ventrɪkjələ/ *adjective* inside or placed into a ventricle in the heart or the brain

**intrinsic** /ɪn'trɪnsɪk/ *adjective* belonging to the essential nature of an organism, or entirely within an organ or part

**intrinsic factor** /ɪn'trɪnsɪk 'fæktə/ *noun* a protein produced in the gastric glands which reacts with the extrinsic factor, and which, if lacking, causes pernicious anaemia

**intrinsic ligament** /ɪn'trɪnsɪk 'lɪgəmənt/ *noun* a ligament which forms part of the capsule surrounding a joint

**intrinsic muscle** /ɪn'trɪnsɪk 'mʌs(ə)/ *noun* a muscle lying completely inside the part or segment, especially of a limb, which it moves

**intro-** /ɪntrəʊ/ *prefix* inward

**introitus** /ɪn'trəʊtəs/ *noun* an opening into any hollow organ or canal

**introjection** /,ɪntrəʊ'dʒekʃən/ *noun* a person's unconscious adoption of the attitudes or values of another person whom he or she wants to impress

**introspection** /,ɪntrə'spekʃən/ *noun* a detailed and sometimes obsessive mental self-examination of feelings, thoughts and motives

**introversion** /,ɪntrə'vɜ:ʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a condition in which a person is excessively interested in

himself or herself and his or her own mental state. Compare **extroversion**

**introvert** /'ɪntrəvɜ:t/ *noun* a person who thinks only about himself or herself and his or her own mental state. Compare **extrovert**

**intubate** /'ɪntju:beɪt/ *verb* to insert a tube into any organ or part of the body. Also called **catheterise**

**intubation** /,ɪntju:'beɪf(ə)n/ *noun* the therapeutic insertion of a tube into the larynx through the glottis to allow the passage of air. Also called **catheterisation**

**intumescence** /,ɪntju:'mes(ə)ns/ *noun* the swelling of an organ

**intussusception** /,ɪntəsə'sepʃən/ *noun* a condition in which part of the gastrointestinal tract becomes folded down inside the part beneath it, causing an obstruction and strangulation of the folded part

**inunction** /ɪn'ʌŋkʃən/ *noun* **1.** the act of rubbing an ointment to the skin so that the medicine in it is absorbed **2.** an ointment which is rubbed into the skin

**invagination** /ɪn,vædʒɪ'neɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* same as **intussusception**

**invalid** /'ɪnvəlɪd/ (*dated*) *noun* someone who has had an illness and has not fully recovered from it or who has been permanently disabled ■ *adjective* weak or disabled

**invasion** /ɪn'veɪʒ(ə)n/ *noun* the entry of bacteria into a body, or the first attack of a disease

**invasive** /ɪn'veɪsɪv/ *adjective* **1.** referring to cancer which tends to spread throughout the body **2.** referring to an inspection or treatment which involves entering the body by making an incision. ♪ **non-invasive**

**inverse care law** /,ɪnvɜ:s 'keə ,lə:/ *noun* the idea that the people who most need care and services are least likely or able to access them

**inversion** /ɪn'vɜ:ʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the fact of being turned towards the inside ○ *inversion of the foot* See illustration at **ANATOMICAL TERMS** in Supplement

**investigative surgery** /ɪn,vestɪgətɪv 'sɜ:dʒəri/ *noun* surgery to investigate the cause of a condition

**in vitro** /,ɪn 'vi:tərəʊ/ *adjective, adverb* a Latin phrase meaning 'in a glass', i.e. in a test tube or similar container used in a laboratory

**in vitro fertilisation** /,ɪn ,vi:tərəʊ ,fɜ:tələɪ 'zeɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the fertilisation of an ovum in the laboratory. ♪ **test-tube baby**. Abbreviation **IVF**

**in vivo** *adjective, adverb* a Latin phrase meaning 'in living tissue', i.e. referring to an experiment which takes place on the living body

**in vivo experiment** /ɪn ,vi:vəʊ k'spɛrɪmənt/ *noun* an experiment on a living body, e.g. that of an animal

**involucrum** /ɪnvəˈluːkrəm/ *noun* a covering of new bone which forms over diseased bone

**involuntary** /ɪnˈvɒlənt(ə)ri/ *adjective* done automatically, without any conscious thought or decision-making being involved ○ *Patients are advised not to eat or drink, to reduce the risk of involuntary vomiting while on the operating table.*

**involuntary action** /ɪnˈvɒlənt(ə)ri ˈækʃən/ *noun* an action which someone does without thinking or making a conscious decision

**involuntary muscle** /ɪnˈvɒlənt(ə)ri ˈmʌs(ə)/ *noun* a muscle supplied by the autonomic nervous system, and therefore not under voluntary control, e.g. the muscle which activates a vital organ such as the heart

**involution** /ɪnvəˈluːʃ(ə)n/ *noun* **1.** the return of an organ to its usual size, e.g. the shrinking of the uterus after childbirth **2.** a period of decline of organs which sets in after middle age

**involutional** /ɪnvəˈluːʃ(ə)n(ə)/ *adjective* referring to involution

**involutional melancholia** /ɪnvəˈluːʃ(ə)n(ə)l ˈmeləˈnkoʊliə/ *noun* a depression which occurs in people, mainly women, after middle age, probably caused by a change of endocrine secretions

**iodine** /ˈaɪdiːn/ *noun* a chemical element which is essential to the body, especially to the functioning of the thyroid gland (NOTE: Lack of iodine in the diet can cause goitre. The chemical symbol is I.)

**IOL** *abbreviation* intraocular lens

**ion** /ˈaɪən/ *noun* an atom that has an electric charge (NOTE: Ions with a positive charge are called cations and those with a negative charge are called anions.)

**ionise** /ˈaɪənəɪz/, **ionize** *verb* to give an atom an electric charge

**ioniser** /ˈaɪənəɪzə/, **ionizer** *noun* a machine that increases the amount of negative ions in the atmosphere of a room, so counteracting the effect of positive ions

**iontophoresis** /aɪˌɒntəʊfəˈrɪːsɪs/ *noun* the movement of ions through a biological material when an electric current passes through it

**IOUS** *abbreviation* intraoperative ultrasound

**IPAV** *abbreviation* intermittent positive airway ventilation. ♢ **positive pressure ventilation**

**ipecacuanha** /ɪpɪkækjuːˈænz/ *noun* a drug made from the root of an American plant, used as a treatment for coughs, and also as an emetic

**IP joint** /ˌaɪ ˈpiː ˌdʒɔɪnt/ *noun* same as **interphalangeal joint**

**IPPV** *abbreviation* intermittent positive pressure ventilation. ♢ **positive pressure ventilation**

**ipratropium** /ˌaɪprəˈtrəʊpiəm/, **ipratropium bromide** /ˌaɪprəˈtrəʊpiəm ˈbrəʊmaɪd/ *noun* a drug which helps to relax muscles in the airways,

used in the treatment of conditions such as asthma, bronchitis and emphysema

**ipsilateral** /ɪpsɪˈlætərəl/ *adjective* located on or affecting the same side of the body. Also called **homolateral**. Opposite **contralateral**

**IQ** *abbreviation* intelligence quotient

**IRDS** *abbreviation* infant respiratory distress syndrome

**irid-** /ɪrɪd/ *prefix* referring to the iris

**iridectomy** /ɪrɪˈdektəmi/ *noun* the surgical removal of part of the iris

**iridocyclitis** /ɪrɪdʊsɪˈklaɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the iris and the tissues which surround it

**iridodialysis** /ɪrɪdɔːdaiˈæləsɪs/ *noun* the separation of the iris from its insertion

**iridoplegia** /ɪrɪdʊˈpliːdʒə/ *noun* paralysis of the iris

**iridoptosis** /ɪrɪdʊˈtəʊsɪs/ *noun* the pushing forward of the iris through a wound in the cornea

**iridotomy** /ɪrɪˈdɒtəmi/ *noun* a surgical incision into the iris

**iris** /ˈaɪrɪs/ *noun* a coloured ring in the eye, with the pupil at its centre. See illustration at **EYE** in Supplement

COMMENT: The iris acts like the aperture in a camera shutter, opening and closing to allow more or less light through the pupil into the eye.

**iritis** /aɪˈraɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the iris

**iron** /ˈaɪən/ *noun* **1.** a chemical element essential to the body, present in foods such as liver and eggs **2.** a common grey metal (NOTE: The chemical symbol is Fe.)

**iron-deficiency anaemia** /ˌaɪən dɪˈfɪʃ(ə)nsi əˌniːmiə/ *noun* anaemia caused by a lack of iron in red blood cells

**iron lung** /ˌaɪən ˈlʌŋ/ *noun* same as **Drinker respirator**

**irradiation** /ɪˌreɪdɪˈeɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* **1.** the process of spreading from a centre, as e.g., nerve impulses do **2.** the use of radiation to treat people or to kill bacteria in food

**irreducible hernia** /ɪrɪˌdjuːsəb(ə)l ˈhɜːniə/ *noun* a hernia where the organ cannot be returned to its usual position

**irrigation** /ɪrɪˈɡeɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the washing out of a cavity in the body

**irritability** /ɪrɪtəˈbɪlɪti/ *noun* the state of being irritable

**irritable** /ˈɪrɪtəb(ə)l/ *adjective* **1.** easily able to become inflamed and painful **2.** feeling annoyed and impatient

**irritable bowel syndrome** /ɪrɪtəb(ə)l ˈbaʊəl ˌsɪndrəʊm/ *noun* ♢ **mucous colitis**. Abbreviation **IBS**

**irritable hip** /ɪrɪtəb(ə)l ˈhɪp/ *noun* a condition of pain in the hip which is caused by swelling of

the synovium. Treatment involves bed rest, traction and anti-inflammatory drugs.

**irritant** /'ɪrɪt(ə)nt/ *noun* a substance which can irritate

**irritant dermatitis** /,ɪrɪt(ə)nt ˌdɜ:mə'taɪtɪs/ *noun* same as **contact dermatitis**

**irritate** /'ɪrɪteɪt/ *verb* to cause a painful reaction in part of the body, especially to make it inflamed  
○ *Some types of wool can irritate the skin.*

**irritation** /,ɪrɪ'teɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a feeling of being irritated  
○ *an irritation caused by the ointment*

**ISC** *abbreviation* intermittent self-catheterisation

**isch-** /ɪsk/ *prefix* too little

**ischaemia** /ɪ'ski:miə/ *noun* a deficient blood supply to a part of the body

**ischaemic** /ɪ'ski:mɪk/ *adjective* lacking in blood

**ischi-** /ɪski/ *prefix* same as **ischio-** (used before vowels)

**ischia** /'ɪskiə/ plural of **ischium**

**ischial** /'ɪskiəl/ *adjective* referring to the ischium or hip joint

**ischial tuberosity** /,ɪskiəl ˌtju:bə'rɒsɪti/ *noun* a lump of bone forming the ring of the ischium

**ischio-** /ɪskiəʊ/ *prefix* referring to the ischium

**ischiorectal** /,ɪskiəʊ'rekt(ə)/ *adjective* referring to both the ischium and the rectum

**ischiorectal abscess** /,ɪskiəʊ'rekt(ə)l 'æbsɛs/ *noun* an abscess which forms in fat cells between the anus and the ischium

**ischiorectal fossa** /,ɪskiəʊ'rekt(ə)l 'fɒsə/ *noun* a space on either side of the lower end of the rectum and anal canal

**ischium** /'ɪskiəm/ *noun* the lower part of the hip bone in the pelvis. See illustration at **PELVIS** in Supplement (NOTE: The plural is **ischia**.)

**Ishihara colour charts** /,ɪʃɪhɑ:rə 'kʌlə ˌtʃɑ:ts/ *plural noun* charts used in a test for colour vision in which numbers or letters are shown in dots of primary colours with dots of other colours around them. People with normal colour vision can see them, but people who are colour-blind cannot.

**islets of Langerhans** /,aɪləts əv 'læŋgəhæns/, **islands of Langerhans** /,aɪləndz əv 'læŋgəhænz/, **islet cells** /'aɪlət selz/ *plural noun* groups of cells in the pancreas which secrete the hormones glucagon, insulin and gastrin [Described 1869. After Paul Langerhans (1847–88), Professor of Pathological Anatomy at Freiburg, Germany.]

**iso-** /aɪsəʊ/ *prefix* equal

**isograft** /'aɪsəʊgrɑ:ft/ *noun* a graft of tissue from an identical twin. Also called **syngraft**

**isoimmunisation** /,aɪsəʊ,ɪmjʊnə'zeɪʃ(ə)n/, **isoimmunization** *noun* immunisation of a person with antigens derived from another person

**isolation** /,aɪsə'leɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the separation of a person, especially one with an infectious disease, from others

**isolation ward** /,aɪsə'leɪʃ(ə)n wɔ:d/ *noun* a special ward where people who have dangerous infectious diseases can be kept isolated from others

**isolator** /'aɪsəleɪtə/ *noun* **1.** a large clear plastic bag in which a person can be nursed, or operated on, in a sterile environment **2.** a room or piece of equipment which keeps people or substances separated from others which may contaminate them  
○ *an isolator stretcher* ○ *an isolator cabinet*

**isoleucine** /,aɪsəʊ'lu:si:n/ *noun* an essential amino acid

**isometric** /,aɪsəʊ'metrɪk/ *adjective* **1.** involving equal measurement ○ *an isometric view of the system* **2.** referring to muscle contraction in which tension occurs with very little shortening of muscle fibres **3.** referring to exercises in which the muscles are put under tension but not contracted

**isometrics** /,aɪsəʊ'metrɪks/ *plural noun* exercises to strengthen the muscles, in which the muscles contract but do not shorten

**isoprenaline** /,aɪsəʊ'preɪnəli:n/, **isoproterenol** /,aɪsəʊprəʊ'terənɒl/ *noun* a drug that relieves asthma by widening the bronchial tubes in the lungs

**isosorbide dinitrate** /,aɪsəʊ,sɔ:bəɪd daɪ 'naɪtrɪt/ *noun* a compound which causes widening or relaxation of the blood vessels, used in the treatment of angina pectoris

**isotonic** /,aɪsəʊ'tɒnɪk/ *adjective* referring to a solution, e.g. a saline drip, which has the same osmotic pressure as blood serum and which can therefore be passed directly into the body. Compare **hypertonic**, **hypotonic**

**isotonic solution** /,aɪsəʊtɒnɪk sə'lu:ʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a solution which has the same osmotic pressure as blood serum, or as another liquid it is compared with

**isotope** /'aɪsətəʊp/ *noun* a form of a chemical element which has the same chemical properties as other forms but a different atomic mass

**isotretinoin** /,aɪsəʊtrɪ'tɪnɔɪn/ *noun* a drug used in the treatment of severe acne and several other skin diseases

**ispaghula** /,ɪspə'gu:lə/, **ispaghula husk** /,ɪspə'gu:lə hʌsk/ *noun* a natural dietary fibre used to treat constipation, diverticulitis and irritable bowel syndrome

**ISS** *abbreviation* injury scoring system

**isthmus** /'ɪsməs/ *noun* a short narrow canal or cavity

**itch** /ɪtʃ/ *noun* an irritated place on the skin which makes a person want to scratch ■ *verb* to produce an irritating sensation, making someone want to scratch

**itching** /'ɪtʃɪŋ/ *noun* same as **pruritus**

**itchy** /'ɪtʃi/ *adjective* making a person want to scratch ○ *The main symptom of the disease is an itchy red rash.*

**-itis** /aɪtɪs/ *suffix* inflammation

**ITU** *abbreviation* intensive therapy unit

**IU** *abbreviation* international unit

**IUCD** *abbreviation* intrauterine contraceptive device

**IUD** *abbreviation* **1.** intrauterine death **2.** intrauterine device

**IV** *abbreviation* intravenous

**IVF** *abbreviation* in vitro fertilisation

**IVP** *abbreviation* intravenous pyelogram

**IVU** *abbreviation* intravenous urography



# J

**J** /dʒeɪ/ *abbreviation* joule

**jab** /dʒæb/ *noun* an injection or inoculation (*informal*) ○ a tetanus jab

**Jacksonian epilepsy** /dʒækˌsəʊniən 'epilepsi/ *noun* a form of epilepsy in which the jerking movements start in one part of the body before spreading to others [Described 1863. After John Hughlings Jackson (1835–1911), British neurologist.]

**Jacquemier's sign** /'dʒækəmiəzˌsaɪn/ *noun* a sign of early pregnancy in which the vaginal mucosa becomes slightly blue due to an increased amount of blood in the arteries [After Jean Marie Jacquemier (1806–79), French obstetrician.]

**jactitation** /ˌdʒæktɪ'teɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the action of constantly moving the body around in a restless way, especially because of mental illness

**jab** /dʒæɡ/ *noun* in Scotland, an injection or inoculation (*informal*)

**jargon** /'dʒɑːɡən/ *noun* **1.** the words used by people who have a particular area of knowledge, which are usually only understood by those people ○ *medical jargon* **2.** a stream of words that makes no sense, produced by someone with aphasia or a severe mental disorder

**jaundice** /'dʒɑːndɪs/ *noun* a condition in which there is an excess of bile pigment in the blood, and in which the pigment is deposited in the skin and the whites of the eyes, which have a yellow colour. Also called **icterus**

**jaw** /dʒɔː/ *noun* the bones in the face which hold the teeth and form the mouth ○ *He fell down and broke his jaw.* ○ *The punch on his mouth broke his jaw.*

COMMENT: The jaw has two parts, the upper (the maxillae) being fixed parts of the skull, and the lower (the mandible) being attached to the skull with a hinge so that it can move up and down.

**jawbone** /'dʒɔːbəʊn/ *noun* one of the bones which form the jaw, especially the lower jaw or mandible

**jejun-** /dʒɪdʒuːn/ *prefix* same as **jejun-** (*used before vowels*)

**jejunal** /dʒɪ'dʒuːn(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to the jejunum

**jejunal ulcer** /dʒɪ,dʒuːn(ə)l 'ʌlsə/ *noun* an ulcer in the jejunum

**jejunectomy** /ˌdʒɪdʒuː'nektəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to remove all or part of the jejunum (NOTE: The plural is **jejunectomies**.)

**jejun-** /dʒɪ:dʒuːnəʊ/ *prefix* referring to the jejunum

**jejunoleostomy** /ˌdʒɪ,dʒuːnəʊ,ɪli'nɒstəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to make an artificial link between the jejunum and the ileum (NOTE: The plural is **jejunoleostomies**.)

**jejunostomy** /ˌdʒɪdʒu'nɒstəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to make an artificial passage to the jejunum through the wall of the abdomen (NOTE: The plural is **jejunostomies**.)

**jejunotomy** /ˌdʒɪdʒu'nɒtəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to cut into the jejunum (NOTE: The plural is **jejunotomies**.)

**jejunum** /dʒɪ'dʒuːnəm/ *noun* the part of the small intestine between the duodenum and the ileum, about 2 metres long. See illustration at **DIGESTIVE SYSTEM** in Supplement

**jerk** /dʒɜːk/ *noun* a sudden movement of part of the body which indicates that the local reflex arc is intact ■ *verb* to make sudden movements, or cause something to make sudden movements ○ *In some forms of epilepsy the limbs jerk.*

**jet lag** /'dʒet læɡ/ *noun* a condition suffered by people who travel long distances in planes, caused by rapid changes in time zones which affect sleep patterns and meal times and thus interfere with the body's metabolism ○ *We had jet lag when we flew from Australia.*

**jet-lagged** /'dʒet læɡd/ *adjective* experiencing jet lag ○ *jet-lagged travellers* ○ *We were jet-lagged for a week.*

**joint** /dʒɔɪnt/ *noun* a structure at a point where two or more bones join, especially one which allows movement of the bones ○ *The elbow is a joint in the arm.* ○ *Arthritis is accompanied by stiffness in the joints.* † **Charcot's joint** (NOTE: For other terms referring to joints, see words beginning with **arthr-**, **arthro-**.)

**joint capsule** /'dʒɔɪnt ˌkæpsjuːl/ *noun* white fibrous tissue which surrounds and holds a joint together. See illustration at **SYNOVIAL JOINT** in Supplement

**joint investment plan** /,dʒɔɪnt ɪn'vestmənt plæn/ *noun* a plan that health and social services draw up together for specific areas of care

**joint mouse** /'dʒɔɪnt maʊs/ *plural noun* a loose piece of bone or cartilage in the knee joint, making the joint lock

**joule** /dʒu:l/ *noun* the SI unit of measurement of work or energy. 4.184 joules equals one calorie. Symbol **J**

**jugular** /'dʒʌgjʊlə/ *adjective* referring to the throat or neck ■ *noun* same as **jugular vein**

**jugular nerve** /'dʒʌgjʊlə nɜ:v/ *noun* one of the nerves in the neck

**jugular trunk** /'dʒʌgjʊlə trʌŋk/ *noun* a terminal lymph vessel in the neck, draining into the subclavian vein

**jugular vein** /'dʒʌgjʊlə veɪn/ *noun* one of the veins which pass down either side of the neck. Also called **jugular**

**jumper's knee** /,dʒʌmpəz 'ni:/ *noun* a painful condition suffered by athletes and dancers in which inflammation develops in the knee joint

**junction** /'dʒʌŋkʃən/ *noun* a joining point

**junior doctor** /,dʒu:niə 'dɒktə/ *noun* a doctor who is completing his or her training in hospital

**junk food** /'dʒʌŋk fu:d/ *noun* food of little nutritional value, e.g. high-fat processed snacks, eaten between or instead of meals

**juvenile** /'dʒu:vənaɪl/ *adjective* relating to or affecting children or adolescents

**juxta-** /dʒʌkstə/ *prefix* beside or near

**juxta-articular** /,dʒʌkstə ɑ:'tɪkjʊlə/ *adjective* occurring near a joint

**juxtaposition** /,dʒʌkstəpə'zɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the placing of two or more things side by side so as to make their similarities or differences more obvious

# K

**k** *symbol* kilo-

**kala-azar** /,kɑ:lə ə'zɑ:/ *noun* an often fatal form of leishmaniasis caused by the infection of the intestines and internal organs by a parasite, *Leishmania*, spread by flies. Symptoms are fever, anaemia, general wasting of the body and swelling of the spleen and liver.

**kaolin** /'keɪəlɪn/ *noun* a fine soft clay used in the making of medical preparations, especially for the treatment of diarrhoea

**Kaposi's sarcoma** /kə,pəʊzɪz sɑ:'kəʊmə/ *noun* a cancer which takes the form of many haemorrhagic nodes affecting the skin, especially on the extremities [Described 1872. After Moritz Kohn Kaposi (1837–1902), Professor of Dermatology at Vienna, Austria.]

**Kartagener's syndrome** /,kɑ:tə'dʒɪ:nəz ,sɪndrəʊnm/ *noun* a hereditary condition in which all the organs in the chest and abdomen are positioned on the opposite side from the usual one, i.e. the heart and stomach are on the right

**karyo-** /kæriəʊ/ *prefix* relating to a cell nucleus  
**karyotype** /'kæriəʊtaɪp/ *noun* the chromosome complement of a cell, shown as a diagram or as a set of letters and numbers

**Kawasaki disease** /,kɑ:wə'sɑ:kɪz dɪ,zɪ:z/ *noun* a retrovirus infection that often occurs in small children and causes a high temperature, rash, reddened eyes, peeling skin and swollen lymph nodes

**Kayser-Fleischer ring** /,kaɪzə 'flaɪʃə ,rɪŋ/ *noun* a brown ring on the outer edge of the cornea, which is a diagnostic sign of hepatolenticular degeneration [Described 1902 by Kayser, 1903 by Fleischer. Bernard Kayser (1869–1954), German ophthalmologist; Bruno Richard Fleischer (1848–1904), German physician.]

**kcal** *abbreviation* kilocalorie

**Kegel exercises** /'keɪg(ə)l ,eksəsəɪzɪz/ *plural noun* exercises which strengthen the muscles of the pelvic floor in women and help to prevent any accidental leakage of urine when they cough, sneeze or lift things

**Keller's operation** /'keləz ɒpə'reɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a surgical operation on the big toe to remove a bunion or to correct an ankylosed joint

[Described 1904. After William Lordan Keller (1874–1959), US surgeon.]

**keloid** /'ki:lɔɪd/ *noun* an excessive amount of scar tissue at the site of a skin injury

**kerat-** /kerət/ *prefix* same as **kerato-** (*used before vowels*)

**keratectasia** /,kerətek'teɪziə/ *noun* a condition in which the cornea bulges

**keratectomy** /,kerə'tektəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to remove the whole or part of the cornea (NOTE: The plural is **keratectomies**.)

**keratic** /kə'rætɪk/ *adjective* **1.** relating to horny tissue or to keratin **2.** relating to the cornea

**keratin** /'kerətɪn/ *noun* a protein found in horny tissue such as fingernails, hair or the outer surface of the skin

**keratinisation** /,kerətɪnaɪ'zeɪʃ(ə)n/, **keratinization** *noun* the appearance of horny characteristics in tissue. Also called **cornification**

**keratinise** /'kerətɪnaɪz, kə'rætɪnaɪz/, **keratinize** *verb* to convert something into keratin or into horny tissue (NOTE: **keratinising** – **keratinised**)

**keratinocyte** /,kerə'tɪnəʊsaɪt/ *noun* a cell which produces keratin

**keratitis** /,kerə'taɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the cornea

**kerato-** /kerətəʊ/ *prefix* referring to horn, horny tissue or the cornea

**keratoconjunctivitis** /,kerətəʊkən,dʒʌŋktɪ'vaɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the cornea with conjunctivitis

**keratoma** /,kerə'təʊmə/ *noun* a hard thickened growth due to hypertrophy of the horny zone of the skin (NOTE: The plural is **keratomas** or **keratomata**.)

**keratomalacia** /,kerətəʊmə'leɪʃə/ *noun* a softening of the cornea frequently caused by Vitamin A deficiency

**keratome** /'kerətəʊm/ *noun* a surgical knife used for operations on the cornea

**keratometer** /,kerə'tɒmɪtə/ *noun* an instrument for measuring the curvature of the cornea

**keratopathy** /,kerə'tɒpəθi/ *noun* any non-inflammatory disorder of the cornea (NOTE: The plural is **keratopathies**.)

**keratoplasty** /'kerətəplæsti/ *noun* a surgical operation to graft corneal tissue from a donor in place of diseased tissue (NOTE: The plural is **keratoplasties**.)

**keratoprosthesis** /,kerətəprɒs'thi:sis/ *noun* 1. a surgical operation to replace the central area of a cornea with clear plastic, when it has become opaque 2. a piece of clear plastic put into the cornea (NOTE: The plural is **keratoprostheses**.)

**keratoscope** /'kerətəskəʊp/ *noun* an instrument for examining the cornea to see if it has an unusual curvature. Also called **Placido's disc**

**keratosis** /,kerətəʊsis/ *noun* a lesion of the skin (NOTE: The plural is **keratoses**.)

**keratotomy** /,kerətətəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to make a cut in the cornea, the first step in many intraocular operations (NOTE: The plural is **keratomies**.)

**kerion** /'kɪəriən/ *noun* a painful soft mass, usually on the scalp, caused by ringworm

**kernicterus** /kə'niktərəs/ *noun* yellow pigmentation of the basal ganglia and other nerve cells in the spinal cord and brain, found in children with icterus

**Kernig's sign** /'kɜ:nɪg z aɪn/ *noun* a symptom of meningitis in which the knee cannot be straightened if the person is lying down with the thigh brought up against the abdomen [Described 1882. After Vladimir Mikhailovich Kernig (1840–1917), Russian neurologist.]

**ketamine** /'ketəmi:n/ *noun* a white crystalline powder that is a general anaesthetic, used in human and veterinary medicine

**ketoacidosis** /,ki:təʊ,æsi'dəʊsis/ *noun* an accumulation of ketone bodies in tissue in diabetes, causing acidosis

**ketoconazole** /,ki:təʊ'kɒnəzəʊl/ *noun* a drug which is effective against a wide range of fungal infections such as cryptococcosis and thrush

**ketogenesis** /,ki:təʊ'dʒenəsis/ *noun* the production of ketone bodies

**ketogenic** /,ki:təʊ'dʒenɪk/ *adjective* forming ketone bodies

**ketogenic diet** /,ki:təʊdʒenɪk 'daɪət/ *noun* a diet with a high fat content, producing ketosis

**ketonaemia** /,ki:təʊ'ni:miə/ *noun* a morbid state in which ketone bodies exist in the blood

**ketone** /'ki:təʊn/ *noun* a chemical compound produced when glucose is unavailable for use as energy, as in untreated diabetes, and fats are used instead, leading to ketosis

**ketone bodies** /'ki:təʊn 'bɒdɪz/ *plural noun* ketone compounds formed from fatty acids

**ketone group** /'ki:təʊn gru:p/ *noun* a chemical group characteristic of ketones, with carbon atoms doubly bonded to an oxygen atom and to the carbon atoms of two other organic groups

**ketonuria** /,ki:təʊ'njʊəriə/ *noun* a state in which ketone bodies are excreted in the urine

**ketoprofen** /,ki:təʊ'prɒfən/ *noun* an anti-inflammatory drug used in the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis and osteoarthritis

**ketosis** /ki:təʊsis/ *noun* a state in which ketone bodies such as acetone and acetic acid accumulate in the tissues, a late complication of Type I diabetes mellitus

**ketosteroid** /,ki:təʊ'stɪərəɔɪd/ *noun* a steroid such as cortisone which contains a ketone group

**keyhole surgery** /'ki:həʊl ,sɜ:dʒəri/ *noun* surgery carried out by inserting tiny surgical instruments through an endoscope (*informal*) Also called **laparoscopic surgery**

**kg** *abbreviation* kilogram

**kidney** /'kɪdni/ *noun* either of two organs situated in the lower part of the back on either side of the spine behind the abdomen, whose function is to maintain the usual concentrations of the main constituents of blood, passing the waste matter into the urine. See illustration at **KIDNEY** in Supplement

**kidney dialysis** /'kɪdni daɪ,æləsis/ *noun* the process of removing waste matter from blood by passing it through a kidney machine. Also called **haemodialysis**

**kidney donor** /'kɪdni ,dəʊnə/ *noun* a person who gives one of his or her kidneys as a transplant

**kidney failure** /'kɪdni ,feɪljə/ *noun* a situation in which the kidneys do not function properly

**kidney machine** /'kɪdni mə,ʃi:n/ *noun* an apparatus through which blood is passed to be cleaned by dialysis if the person's kidneys have failed

**kidney stone** /'kɪdni stəʊn/ *noun* a hard mass of calcium like a little piece of stone which forms in the kidney

**kidney transplant** /'kɪdni ,trænsplɑ:nt/ *noun* a surgical operation to give someone with a diseased or damaged kidney a kidney from another person

**killer cell** /'kɪlə sel/, **killer T cell** /,kɪlə 'ti: sel/ *noun* a type of immune cell that recognises and destroys cells that have specific antigens on their surface, e.g. virus-infected or cancerous cells

**kilo-** /kɪləʊ/ *prefix* one thousand ( $10^3$ ). Symbol **k**

**kilogram** /'kɪləgræm/ *noun* an SI unit of measurement of weight equal to 1000 grams ○ *She weighs 62 kilos (62 kg)*. Symbol **kg**

**kilojoule** /'kɪləʊdʒu:l/ *noun* an SI unit of measurement of energy or heat equal to 1000 joules. Symbol **kJ**

**kilopascal** /'kɪləʊpæskəl/ *noun* an SI unit of measurement of pressure equal to 1000 pascals. Symbol **kPa**

**Kimmelstiel-Wilson disease** /,kɪməlsti:əl 'wɪlsən dɪ,zɪ:z/, **Kimmelstiel-Wilson syn-**

**drome** /,kɪməlsti:/ 'wɪlsən ˌsɪndrəʊm/ *noun* a form of nephrosclerosis found in people with diabetes [Described 1936. After Paul Kimmelstiel (1900–70), US pathologist; Clifford Wilson (1906–98), Professor of Medicine, London University, UK]

**kin** /kɪn/ *noun* relatives or close members of the family

**kin-** /kɪn/ *prefix* same as **kine-** (used before vowels)

**kinaesthesia** /,kɪni:s'ti:ziəl/ *noun* the fact of being aware of the movement and position of parts of the body (NOTE: The US spelling is **kinesthesia**.)

**kinanaesthesia** /,kɪnæni:s'ti:ziəl/ *noun* the fact of not being able to sense the movement and position of parts of the body (NOTE: The US spelling is **kinanesthesia**.)

**kinase** /'kaɪneɪz/ *noun* an enzyme belonging to a large family of related substances that bind to the energy-providing molecule ATP and regulate functions such as cell division and signalling between cells

**kine-** /kɪni/ *prefix* movement

**kinematics** /,kɪn'mætɪks/ *noun* the science of movement, especially of body movements (NOTE: Also spelled **cinematics**.)

**kineplasty** /'kɪnɪplæsti/ *noun* an amputation in which the muscles of the stump of the amputated limb are used to operate an artificial limb (NOTE: Also spelled **cinoplasty**. The plural is **kineplasties**.)

**kinesi-** /kaɪni:si/ *prefix* movement (NOTE: used before vowels)

**kinesiology** /,kaɪni:si'blədʒi/ *noun* the study of human movements, particularly with regard to their use in treatment

**kinesis** /kɪ'ni:sis/ *noun* the movement of a cell in response to a stimulus. Compare **taxis**

**-kinesis** /kɪni:sis/ *suffix* 1. activity or motion 2. a change in the movement of a cell, though not in any particular direction. Examples are a change in its speed or in its turning behaviour.

**kinesitherapy** /,kaɪni:si'θerəpi/ *noun* therapy involving movement of parts of the body

**kinetic** /kɪ'netɪk, kɑr'netɪk/ *adjective* relating to movement

**King's Fund** /'kɪŋz fʌnd/ *noun* a major independent health charity in London

**King's model** /'kɪŋz ˌmɒd(ə)/ *noun* a model of nurse–patient relationships based on ten principles: interaction, perception, communication, transaction, role, stress, growth and development, time, self and space. Through an exchange of information nurses and patients work together to help individuals and groups attain, maintain and restore health.

**kinin** /'kaɪnɪn/ *noun* a polypeptide that makes blood vessels widen and smooth muscles contract

**Kirschner wire** /,kɪz:ʃ(ə)nə 'waɪə/, **Kirschner's wire** *noun* a wire attached to a bone and tightened to provide traction to a fracture [Described 1909. After Martin Kirschner (1879–1942), Professor of Surgery at Heidelberg, Germany.]

**kiss of life** /,kɪs əv 'laɪf/ *noun* same as **cardiopulmonary resuscitation** (informal)

**kJ** *abbreviation* kilojoule

**Klebsiella** /,klebsi'elə/ *noun* a Gram-negative bacterium, one form of which, *Klebsiella pneumoniae*, can cause pneumonia

**Klebs-Loeffler bacillus** /,klebz 'leflə bə ˌsɪləs/ *noun* the bacterium which causes diphtheria, *Corynebacterium diphtheriae* [After Theodor Albrecht Klebs (1834–1913), bacteriologist in Zürich, Switzerland, and Chicago, USA; Friedrich August Loeffler (1852–1915), bacteriologist in Berlin, Germany.]

**Kleihauer test** /'klaɪhəʊ test/, **Kleihauer-Betke test** *noun* a test used to check whether there has been any blood loss from a fetus to the mother across the placenta. It is usually done immediately after delivery.

**klepto-** /kleptəʊ/ *prefix* stealing or theft

**kleptomania** /,kleptəʊ'meɪniəl/ *noun* a form of mental disorder in which someone has a compulsive desire to steal things, even things of little value

**kleptomaniac** /,kleptəʊ'meɪniæk/ *noun* a person who has a compulsive desire to steal

**Klinefelter's syndrome** /'klaɪnfeltəz ˌsɪndrəʊm/ *noun* a genetic disorder in which a male has an extra female chromosome, making an XXY set, giving sterility and partial female characteristics [Described 1942. After Harry Fitch Klinefelter Jr. (b. 1912), Associate Professor of Medicine, Johns Hopkins Medical School, Baltimore, USA.]

**Clumpke's paralysis** /,klu:mpkəz pə 'ræləsis/ *noun* a form of paralysis due to an injury during birth, affecting the forearm and hand. Also called **Déjerine-Clumpke's syndrome** [Described 1885. After Augusta Klumpke (Madame Déjerine-Klumpke) (1859–1937), French neurologist, one of the first women to qualify in Paris in 1888.]

**knee** /ni:/ *noun* a joint in the middle of the leg, joining the femur and the tibia (NOTE: For other terms referring to the knee, see **genu**.)

**kneecap** /'ni:kæp/ *noun* same as **patella**

**knee jerk** /'ni: dʒɜ:k/ *noun* same as **patellar reflex**

**knee joint** /'ni: dʒɔɪnt/ *noun* a joint where the femur and the tibia are joined, covered by the kneecap

**knock-knee** /,nɒk 'ni:/ *noun* a state in which the knees touch and the ankles are apart when a

person is standing straight. Also called **genu valgum**

**knock-kneed** /,nɒk 'ni:ɪd/ *adjective* referring to a person whose knees touch when he or she stands straight with feet slightly apart

**knock out** /,nɒk 'aʊt/ *verb* to hit someone so hard that he or she is no longer conscious ○ *He was knocked out by a blow on the head.*

**knowledge and skills framework** /,nɒlɪdʒ ən 'skɪlz ˌfreɪmwɜ:k/ *noun* full form of **KSF**

**knuckle** /'nʌk(ə)l/ *noun* the back of each joint on a person's hand

**Kocher manoeuvre** /'kɒkə mə,nu:və/ *noun* a method for realigning a dislocated shoulder in which the arm is raised and a sudden change is made between inward and outward rotation of the head of the joint

**Koch's bacillus** /,kəʊks bə'sɪləs/ *noun* the bacterium which causes tuberculosis, *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* [Described 1882. After Robert Koch (1843–1910), Professor of Hygiene in Berlin, Germany, later Director of the Institute for Infectious Diseases. (Nobel Prize 1905).]

**Köhler's disease** /'kɔ:ləz dɪ'si:z/ *noun* a degeneration of the navicular bone in children. Also called **scaphoiditis** [Described 1908 and 1926. After Alban Köhler (1874–1947), German radiologist.]

**koilonychia** /,kɔɪləʊ'nɪkiə/ *noun* a condition in which the fingernails are brittle and concave, caused by iron-deficiency anaemia

**Koplik's spots** /'kɒplɪks spɒts/ *plural noun* small white spots with a blue tinge surrounded by a red areola, found in the mouth in the early stages of measles [Described 1896. After Henry Koplik (1858–1927), US paediatrician.]

**Korotkoff's method** /'kɒrətɒkɒfs ˌmeθəd/ *noun* a method of finding a person's blood pressure by inflating a cuff around his or her upper arm to a pressure well above the systolic blood pressure and then gradually decreasing it

**Korsakoff's syndrome** /'kɔ:səkɒfs ˌsɪndrəʊm/ *noun* a condition, caused usually by chronic alcoholism or disorders in which there is a deficiency of vitamin B, in which a person's memory fails and he or she invents things which have not happened and is confused [Described 1887. After Sergei Sergeyevich Korsakoff (1854–1900), Russian psychiatrist.]

**kraurosis penis** /krɔ:ˌrəʊsɪs 'pi:nɪs/ *noun* a condition in which the foreskin becomes dry and shrivelled

**kraurosis vulvae** /krɔ:ˌrəʊsɪs 'vʌlvə/ *noun* a condition in which the vulva becomes thin and dry due to lack of oestrogen, found usually in elderly women

**Krause corpuscles** /'kraʊzə ˌkɔ:pəs(ə)lz/ *plural noun* encapsulated nerve endings in the mucous membrane of the mouth, nose, eyes and genitals [Described 1860. After Wilhelm Johann Friedrich Krause (1833–1910), German anatomist.]

**Krebs cycle** /'kreɪz ˌsaɪk(ə)l/ *noun* same as **citric acid cycle** [Described 1937. After Sir Hans Adolf Krebs (1900–81), German biochemist who emigrated to England in 1934. Shared the Nobel prize for Medicine 1953 with F.A. Lipmann.]

**KSF** /ˌkeɪ es 'ef/ *noun* a document setting out the knowledge and skills required in a particular healthcare post, giving guidance on professional development, and setting out the pay progression. Full form **knowledge and skills framework**

**Kuntscher nail** /'kʌntʃə neɪl, **Küntschner nail** *noun* a long steel nail used in operations to pin fractures of long bones, especially the femur, through the bone marrow [Described 1940. After Gerhard Kuntscher (1900–72), German surgeon.]

**Kupffer's cells** /'kʊpɸəz selz/, **Kupffer cells** /'kʊpɸə selz/ *plural noun* large specialised liver cells which break down haemoglobin into bile [Described 1876. After Karl Wilhelm von Kupffer (1829–1902), German anatomist.]

**Kveim test** /'kvaɪm test/ *noun* a skin test to confirm the presence of sarcoidosis [After Morten Ansgar Kveim (1892–1966), Swedish physician.]

**kwashiorkor** /,kwɒʃi'ɔ:kɔ:/ *noun* malnutrition of small children, mostly in tropical countries, causing anaemia, wasting of the body and swollen liver

**kypho-** /kaɪfəʊ/ *prefix* a hump

**kyphoscoliosis** /,kaɪfəʊ,skɒli'əʊsɪs/ *noun* a condition in which someone has both backward and lateral curvature of the spine

**kyphosis** /kaɪ'fəʊsɪs/ *noun* an excessive backward curvature of the top part of the spine (NOTE: The plural is **kyphoses**.)

**kyphotic** /kaɪ'fɒtɪk/ *adjective* referring to kyphosis

# L

**l, L** symbol **litre**

**lab-** /leɪb/ *prefix* same as **labio-** (used before vowels)

**labia** /'leɪbiə/ *plural of labium*

**labial** /'leɪbiəl/ *adjective* referring to the lips or to labia

**labia majora** /,leɪbiə mə'dʒɔ:rə/ *plural noun* two large fleshy folds at the outside edge of the vulva. See illustration at **UROGENITAL SYSTEM (FEMALE)** in Supplement

**labia minora** /,leɪbiə mɪ'nɔ:rə/ *plural noun* two small fleshy folds on the inside edge of the vulva. See illustration at **UROGENITAL SYSTEM (FEMALE)** in Supplement. Also called **nymphae**

**labile** /'leɪbaɪl/ *adjective* referring to a drug which is unstable and likely to change if heated or cooled

**lability of mood** /lə'bɪlɪtɪ əv 'mu:d/ *noun* a tendency for a person's mood to change suddenly

**labio-** /leɪbiəʊ/ *prefix* referring to the lips or to labia

**labioplasty** /'leɪbiəʊ,plæsti/ *noun* a surgical operation to repair damaged or deformed lips (NOTE: The plural is **labioplasties**.)

**labium** /'leɪbiəm/ *noun* any of the four fleshy folds which surround the female genital organs

**laboratory technician** /lə'bɔrət(ə)rɪ tek'nɪf(ə)n/ *noun* a person who does practical work in a laboratory and has particular care of equipment

**laboratory techniques** /lə'bɔrət(ə)rɪ tek'nɪ:kz/ *plural noun* the methods or skills needed to perform experiments in a laboratory

**laboratory test** /lə'bɔrət(ə)rɪ test/ *noun* a test carried out in a laboratory

**labour** /'leɪbəl/ *noun* childbirth, especially the contractions in the uterus which take place during childbirth

**laboured breathing** /,leɪbəd 'brɪ:ðɪŋ/ *noun* difficult breathing, which can be due to various causes such as asthma

**labour pains** /'leɪbə peɪnz/ *plural noun* the pains felt at regular intervals by a woman as the muscles of the uterus contract during childbirth

**labrum** /'leɪbrəm/ *noun* a ring of cartilage around the rim of a joint (NOTE: The plural is **labra**.)

**labyrinth** /'leɪbərɪnθ/ *noun* a series of interconnecting tubes, especially those in the inside of the ear

**labyrinthectomy** /,leɪbərɪn'θektəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to remove the labyrinth of the inner ear (NOTE: The plural is **labyrinthectomies**.)

**labyrinthitis** /,leɪbərɪn'θaɪtɪs/ *noun* same as **otitis interna**

**laceration** /,læsə'reɪf(ə)n/ *noun* **1.** a wound which has been cut or torn with rough edges, and is not the result of stabbing or pricking **2.** the act of tearing tissue

**lachrymal** /'lækɪrɪm(ə)l/ *adjective* same as **lacrimal**

**lacrimal** /'lækɪrɪm(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to tears, the tear ducts or the tear glands. ♪ **nasolacrimal**

**lacrimal apparatus** /,lækɪrɪm(ə)l ,æpə'reɪtəs/ *noun* the arrangement of glands and ducts which produce and drain tears. Also called **lacrimal system**

**lacrimal bone** /'lækɪrɪm(ə)l bəʊn/ *noun* one of two little bones which join with others to form the orbits

**lacrimal canaliculus** /,lækɪrɪm(ə)l ,kænə'ɪkʃjʊləs/ *noun* a small canal draining tears into the lacrimal sac

**lacrimal caruncle** /,lækɪrɪm(ə)l kə'rʌŋk(ə)l/ *noun* a small red point at the inner corner of each eye

**lacrimal duct** /'lækɪrɪm(ə)l dʌkt/ *noun* a small duct leading from the lacrimal gland. Also called **tear duct**

**lacrimal gland** /'lækɪrɪm(ə)l glænd/ *noun* a gland beneath the upper eyelid which secretes tears. Also called **tear gland**

**lacrimal puncta** /,lækɪrɪm(ə)l 'pʌŋktə/ *plural noun* small openings of the lacrimal canaliculus at the corners of the eyes through which tears drain into the nose

**lacrimal sac** /ˌlækrɪm(ə)l 'sæk/ *noun* a sac at the upper end of the nasolacrimal duct, linking it with the lacrimal canaliculus

**lacrimal system** /ˌlækrɪm(ə)l ,sɪstəm/ *noun* same as **lacrimal apparatus**

**lacrimation** /ˌlækrɪ'meɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the production of tears

**lacrimator** /ˌlækrɪmeɪtə/ *noun* a substance which irritates the eyes and makes tears flow

**lacrymal** /ˌlækrɪm(ə)l/, **lachrymal** /ˌlækrɪm(ə)l/ *adjective* same as **lacrimal**

**lact-** /lækt/ *prefix* same as **lacto-** (used before vowels)

**lactase** /ˌlækteɪz/ *noun* an enzyme, secreted in the small intestine, which converts milk sugar into glucose and galactose

**lactate** /lækt'teɪt/ *verb* to produce milk in the body (NOTE: **lactating** – **lactated**)

**lactation** /lækt'teɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the production of milk in the body

**lacteal** /ˌlæktiəl/ *adjective* referring to milk ■ *noun* a lymph vessel in a villus which helps the digestive process in the small intestine by absorbing fat

**lactic** /ˌlæktɪk/ *adjective* relating to milk

**lactic acid** /ˌlæktɪk 'æsɪd/ *noun* a sugar which forms in cells and tissue, and also in sour milk, cheese and yoghurt

**lactiferous** /lækt'tɪfərəs/ *adjective* producing, secreting or carrying milk

**lactiferous duct** /lækt,tɪfərəs 'dʌkt/ *noun* a duct in the breast which carries milk

**lactiferous sinus** /lækt,tɪfərəs 'saɪnəs/ *noun* a dilatation of the lactiferous duct at the base of the nipple

**lacto-** /læktəʊ/ *prefix* referring to milk

**Lactobacillus** /ˌlæktəʊbə'sɪləs/ *noun* a genus of Gram-positive bacteria which produces lactic acid from glucose and may be found in the digestive tract and the vagina

**lactogenic hormone** /ˌlæktəʊ,dʒenɪk 'hɔ:məʊn/ *noun* same as **prolactin**

**lactose** /ˌlæktəʊs/ *noun* a type of sugar found in milk

**lactose intolerance** /ˌlæktəʊs ɪn,tɒlərəns/ *noun* a condition in which a person cannot digest lactose because lactase is absent in the intestine or because of an allergy to milk, causing diarrhoea

**lactosuria** /ˌlæktəʊ'sjʊəriəl/ *noun* the excretion of lactose in the urine

**lactulose** /ˌlæktjʊləʊs/ *noun* an artificially produced sugar used as a laxative

**lacuna** /læ'kjʊ:nəl/ *noun* a small hollow or cavity (NOTE: The plural is **lacunae**.)

**Laënnec's cirrhosis** /ˌleɪnɛks sə'rʊʊsɪs/ *noun* the commonest form of alcoholic cirrhosis of the liver [Described 1819. After René

Théophile Hyacinthe Laënnec (1781–1826), Professor of medicine at the Collège de France, and inventor of the stethoscope.]

**-lalia** /leɪliə/ *suffix* speech or a speech disorder

**lambda** /ˈlæmɪdə/ *noun **1.** the 11th letter of the Greek alphabet **2.** the point at the back of the skull where the sagittal suture and lambdoidal suture meet*

**lambdoid** /ˈlæmɪdɔɪd/ *adjective* shaped like the capital Greek letter lambda, like an upside down V or y

**lambdoid suture** /ˈlæmɪdɔɪd ,su:tʃə/, **lambdoidal suture** /ˈlæmɪdɔɪd(ə)l ,su:tʃə/ *noun* a horizontal joint across the back of the skull between the parietal and occipital bones

**lambliasis** /læm'blaɪəsɪs/ *noun* same as **giardiasis**

**lame** /leɪm/ *adjective* not able to walk easily because of pain, stiffness or damage in a leg or foot (NOTE: This term is regarded as offensive.)

**lamella** /læ'melə/ *noun* a thin sheet of tissue (NOTE: The plural is **lamellae**.)

**lamina** /ˈlæmɪnə/ *noun* a thin membrane

**lamina propria** /ˌlæmɪnə 'prɔʊprɪə/ *noun* the connective tissue of mucous membranes containing, e.g., blood vessels and lymphatic tissues

**laminectomy** /ˌlæmɪ'nektəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to cut through the lamina of a vertebra in the spine to get to the spinal cord. Also called **rachiotomy** (NOTE: The plural is **laminectomies**.)

**lamotrigine** /læ'mɒtrɪdʒɪn/ *noun* a drug that helps to control petit mal epilepsy

**lance** /lɑ:ns/ *verb* to make a cut in a boil or abscess to remove the pus

**lancet** /ˈlɑ:nsɪt/ *noun* **1.** a sharp two-edged pointed knife formerly used in surgery **2.** a small pointed implement used to take a small capillary blood sample, e.g. to measure blood glucose levels

**lancinate** /ˈlɑ:nsɪneɪt/ *verb* to lacerate or cut something (NOTE: **lancinating** – **lancinated**)

**lancinating** /ˈlɑ:nsɪneɪtɪŋ/ *adjective* referring to pain which is sharp and cutting

**Landsteiner's classification** /ˈlændstəɪnəz klæsɪfɪ,keɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* same as **ABO system**

**Langerhans' cells** /ˌlæŋgəhæns selz/ *plural noun* cells on the outer layers of the skin

**Langer's lines** /ˌlæŋgəz laɪnz/ *plural noun* the arrangement of collagen protein fibres which causes the usual skin creases. Cuts made along these lines sever fewer fibres and heal better than other cuts. Also called **cleavage lines**

**lanolin** /ˈlænəlɪn/ *noun* grease from sheep's wool which absorbs water and is used to rub on dried skin, or in the preparation of cosmetics

**lanugo** /læ'nju:gəʊ/ *noun* **1.** soft hair on the body of a fetus or newborn baby **2.** soft hair on the



body of an adult, except on the palms of the hands, the soles of the feet and the parts where long hair grows

**laparo-** /læpərəʊ/ *prefix* the lower abdomen

**laparoscope** /'læpərəskəʊp/ *noun* a surgical instrument which is inserted through a hole in the abdominal wall to allow a surgeon to examine the inside of the abdominal cavity. Also called **peritoneoscope**

**laparoscopic surgery** /,læpərə,skɒpɪk 'sɜ:dʒəri/ *noun* same as **keyhole surgery**

**laparoscopy** /,læpə'rɒskəpi/ *noun* a procedure in which a laparoscope is used to examine the inside of the abdominal cavity. Also called **peritoneoscopy** (NOTE: The plural is **laparoscopies**.)

**laparotomy** /,læpə'rɒtəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to cut open the abdominal cavity (NOTE: The plural is **laparotomies**.)

**large intestine** /,lɑ:dʒɪn'testɪn/ *noun* the section of the digestive system from the caecum to the rectum

**Lariam** /'læriəm/ a trade name for mefloquine hydrochloride

**laryng-** /lærɪndʒ/ *prefix* same as **laryngo-** (used before vowels)

**laryngeal** /lærɪndʒiəl/ *adjective* referring to the larynx

**laryngeal inlet** /lærɪndʒiəl 'ɪnlət/ *noun* the entrance from the laryngopharynx leading through the vocal cords to the trachea

**laryngeal prominence** /lærɪndʒiəl 'prɒmɪnəns/ *noun* same as **Adam's apple**

**laryngeal reflex** /lærɪndʒiəl 'rɪ:fleks/ *noun* the reflex that makes a person cough

**laryngectomy** /,læɪrɪn'dʒektəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to remove the larynx, usually as treatment for throat cancer (NOTE: The plural is **laryngectomies**.)

**laryngismus** /,læɪrɪn'dʒɪzməs/, **laryngismus stridulus** /læɪrɪn,dʒɪzməs 'strɪdʒʊləs/ *noun* a spasm of the throat muscles with a sharp intake of breath which occurs when the larynx is irritated, as in children who have croup

**laryngitis** /,læɪrɪn'dʒaɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the larynx

**laryngo-** /lærɪŋgəʊ/ *prefix* larynx

**laryngology** /,læɪrɪn'gɒlədʒi/ *noun* the study of diseases of the larynx, throat and vocal cords

**laryngomalacia** /lærɪŋgəʊmə'leɪʃə/ *noun* a condition in which breathing is made difficult by softness of the larynx, occurring mainly in children under the age of two

**laryngopharyngeal** /lærɪŋgəʊfə'rɪndʒiəl/ *adjective* referring to both the larynx and the pharynx

**laryngopharynx** /lærɪŋgəʊ'fæɪrɪŋks/ *noun* the part of the pharynx below the hyoid bone

**laryngoscope** /lærɪŋgəskəʊp/ *noun* an instrument for examining the inside of the larynx using a light and mirrors

**laryngoscopy** /,læɪrɪŋ'gɒskəpi/ *noun* an examination of the larynx with a laryngoscope (NOTE: The plural is **laryngoscopies**.)

**laryngospasm** /lærɪŋgəspæzəm/ *noun* a muscular spasm which suddenly closes the larynx

**laryngostenosis** /lærɪŋgəʊstə'nəʊsɪs/ *noun* narrowing of the lumen of the larynx

**laryngostomy** /,læɪrɪŋ'gɒstəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to make a permanent opening from the neck into the larynx (NOTE: The plural is **laryngostomies**.)

**laryngotomy** /,læɪrɪŋ'gɒtəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to make an opening in the larynx through the membrane, especially in an emergency, when the throat is blocked (NOTE: The plural is **laryngotomies**.)

**laryngotracheal** /lærɪŋgəʊ'treɪkiəl/ *adjective* relating to both the larynx and the trachea ○ *laryngotracheal stenosis*

**laryngotracheobronchitis** /lærɪŋgəʊ'treɪkiəʊbrɒŋ'kaɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the larynx, trachea and bronchi, as in croup

**larynx** /'læɪrɪŋks/ *noun* the organ in the throat which produces sounds. Also called **voice box** (NOTE: The plural is **larynges** or **larynxes**.)

**laser** /'leɪzə/ *noun* an instrument which produces a highly concentrated beam of light which can be used to cut or attach tissue, as in operations for a detached retina

**laser laparoscopy** /,leɪzə læpə'rɒskəpi/ *noun* surgery performed through a laparoscope using a laser

**laser probe** /'leɪzə prəʊb/ *noun* a metal probe which is inserted into the body and through which a laser beam can be passed to remove a blockage in an artery

**laser surgery** /'leɪzə ,sɜ:dʒəri/ *noun* surgery using lasers, e.g. for the removal of tumours, sealing blood vessels, or the correction of shortsightedness

**Lasix** /'leɪzɪks/ a trade name for frusemide

**Lassa fever** /'læsə ,fi:və/ *noun* a highly infectious and often fatal virus disease found in Central and West Africa, causing high fever, pains, and ulcers in the mouth [After a village in northern Nigeria where the fever was first reported.]

**lassitude** /'læsɪtju:d/ *noun* a state where a person does not want to do anything, sometimes because he or she is depressed

**latent** /'leɪt(ə)nt/ *adjective* referring to a disease which is present in the body but does not show any signs ○ *The children were tested for latent viral infection.*

**lateral** /'læt(ə)rəl/ *adjective* further away from the midline of the body

**lateral aspect** /ˌlæt(ə)rəl 'æspekt/ *noun* a view of the side of part of the body. Also called **lateral view**. See illustration at **ANATOMICAL TERMS** in Supplement

**lateral epicondyle** /ˌlæt(ə)rəl ˌepɪ'kɒndaɪl/, **lateral epicondyle of the humerus** /ˌlæt(ə)rəl epɪ'kɒndaɪl əv ðə 'hju:mərəs/ *noun* a lateral projection on the rounded end of the humerus at the elbow joint

**lateral epicondylitis** /ˌlæt(ə)rəl ˌepɪkɒndɪ 'laɪtɪs/ *noun* same as **tennis elbow**

**laterally** /'lætrəli/ *adverb* towards or on the side of the body. See illustration at **ANATOMICAL TERMS** in Supplement

**lateral malleolus** /ˌlæt(ə)rəl mə'li:ələs/ *noun* the part of the end of the fibula which protrudes on the outside of the ankle

**lateral view** /ˌlæt(ə)rəl 'vju:/ *noun* same as **lateral aspect**

**lateroversion** /ˌlæt(ə)rəʊ'vɜ:ʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a condition in which an organ is turned to one side

**latissimus dorsi** /lə'tɪsɪməs 'dɔ:si/ *noun* a large flat triangular muscle covering the lumbar region and the lower part of the chest

**laudanum** /'lɔ:d(ə)nəm/ *noun* a solution of opium in alcohol that was formerly in widespread use for pain relief

**laughing gas** /'lɑ:fɪŋ gæs/ *noun* same as **nitrous oxide** (*informal*)

**lavage** /'lævɪdʒ, læ'vɑ:ʒ/ *noun* the act of washing or irrigating an organ such as the stomach

**laxative** /'læksətɪv/ *adjective* causing a bowel movement ■ *noun* a medicine which causes a bowel movement, e.g. bisacodyl, which stimulates intestinal motility, or lactulose which alters fluid retention in the bowel ► also called (all senses) **purgative**

**lazy eye** /ˌleɪzi 'aɪ/ *noun* an eye which does not focus properly without an obvious cause (*informal*) ⇨ **amblyopia**

**LD** *abbreviation* lethal dose

**LDL** *abbreviation* low-density lipoprotein

**L-dopa** /ˌlˈdɒpə/ *noun* same as **levodopa**

**LE** *abbreviation* lupus erythematosus

**lead** /led/ *noun* a very heavy soft metallic element, which is poisonous in compounds (NOTE: The chemical symbol is **Pb**.)

**lead poisoning** /ˌled 'pɔɪz(ə)nɪŋ/ *noun* poisoning caused by taking in lead salts. Also called **plumbism**, **saturnism**

**learning** /'lɜ:nɪŋ/ *noun* the act of gaining knowledge of something or of how to do something

**learning disability** /'lɜ:nɪŋ dɪsə'bɪlɪti/, **learning difficulty** /'lɜ:nɪŋ ˌdɪfɪk(ə)lɪti/ *noun* a condition that results in someone finding it difficult to learn skills or information at the same rate

as others of similar age ○ *children with learning disabilities*

**LE cells** /ˌel 'i:ˌselz/ *plural noun* white blood cells which show that someone has lupus erythematosus

**lecithin** /ˌlesɪθɪn/ *noun* a chemical which is a constituent of all animal and plant cells and is involved in the transport and absorption of fats

**leech** /li:tʃ/ *noun* a blood-sucking parasitic worm which lives in water, occasionally used in specialist procedures

**leg** /leg/ *noun* a part of the body with which a person or animal walks and stands

**Legg-Calvé disease** /ˌleg ˈkælveɪ dɪˌzi:z/, **Legg-Calvé-Perthes disease** /ˌleg ˈkælveɪ 'pɜ:tɪz dɪˌzi:z/ *noun* degeneration of the upper end of the thighbone in young boys, which prevents the bone growing properly and can result in a permanent limp [Described 1910 separately by all three workers. Arthur Thornton Legg (1874–1939), American orthopaedic surgeon; Jacques Calvé (1875–1954), French orthopaedic surgeon; Georg Clemens Perthes (1869–1927), German surgeon.]

**Legionnaires' disease** /ˌli:dʒə'neəz dɪˌzi:z/ *noun* a bacterial disease similar to pneumonia

**leio-** /leɪəʊ/ *prefix* smooth or smoothness

**leiomyoma** /ˌlaɪəʊmaɪ'əʊmə/ *noun* a tumour of smooth muscle, especially the smooth muscle coating the uterus (NOTE: The plural is **leiomyomas** or **leiomyomata**.)

**leiomyosarcoma** /ˌlaɪəʊˌmaɪəʊsɑ:'kəʊmə/ *noun* a sarcoma in which large bundles of smooth muscle are found (NOTE: The plural is **leiomyosarcomas** or **leiomyosarcomata**.)

**leishmaniasis** /ˌli:ʃmə'naɪəʊsɪs/ *noun* a disease caused by the parasite *Leishmania*, one form of which causes disfiguring ulcers, while another attacks the liver and bone marrow

**Lembert's suture** /'lə:mbeəz ˌsu:tʃə/ *noun* a suture used to close a wound in the intestine which includes all the coats of the intestine [Described 1826. After Antoine Lembert (1802–51), French surgeon.]

**lens** /lenz/ *noun* **1.** the part of the eye behind the iris and pupil, which focuses light coming from the cornea onto the retina. See illustration at **EYE** in Supplement **2.** a piece of shaped glass or plastic which forms part of a pair of spectacles or microscope **3.** same as **contact lens**

**lens implant** /ˌlenz ˌɪmplɑ:nt/ *noun* an artificial lens implanted in the eye when the natural lens is removed, as in the case of cataract

**lenticular** /len'tɪkjulə/ *adjective* referring to or like a lens

**lentigo** /len'taɪgəʊ/ *noun* a small brown spot on the skin often caused by exposure to sunlight. Also called **freckle** (NOTE: The plural is **lentiginos**.)

**leontiasis** /,li:ɒn'taɪəsɪs/ *noun* a rare disorder in which the skull bones become enlarged and may give the appearance of a lion's head. It occurs if Paget's disease is not treated.

**leprosy** /'leprəsi/ *noun* an infectious bacterial disease of skin and peripheral nerves caused by *Mycobacterium leprae*, which destroys the tissues and causes severe disfigurement if left untreated. Also called **Hansen's disease**

**leptin** /'leptɪn/ *noun* a hormone produced by fat cells that signals the body's level of hunger to the hypothalamus of the brain

**lepto-** /leptəʊ/ *prefix* thin

**leptocyte** /'leptəʊsaɪt/ *noun* a thin red blood cell found in anaemia

**leptomeninges** /,leptəʊme'nɪndʒi:z/ *plural noun* the two inner meninges, the pia mater and arachnoid

**leptomeningitis** /,leptəʊmenɪn'dʒaɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the leptomeninges

**Leptospira** /,leptəʊ'spaɪrə/ *noun* a genus of bacteria excreted continuously in the urine of rats and many domestic animals. It can infect humans, causing leptospirosis or Weil's disease.

**leptospirosis** /,leptəʊspaɪ'rəʊsɪs/ *noun* an infectious disease caused by the spirochaete *Leptospira*, transmitted to humans from rat urine, causing jaundice and kidney damage. Also called **Weil's disease**

**lesbianism** /,lezbɪənɪz(ə)m/ *noun* sexual attraction in one woman for another. Compare **homosexuality**

**Lesch-Nyhan disease** /,leʃ 'naɪhən dɪ,zɪ:z/, **Lesch-Nyhan syndrome** /,leʃ 'naɪhən ,sɪndrəʊm/ *noun* a rare genetic disorder in boys caused by a lack of the enzyme HPRT. Symptoms include uncontrolled muscle movements and learning disabilities, and life expectancy is 20 – 25.

**lesion** /'li:ʒ(ə)n/ *noun* a wound, sore or damage to the body (NOTE: **Lesion** is used to refer to any damage to the body, from the fracture of a bone to a cut on the skin.)

**lesser** /'lesə/ *adjective* smaller

**lesser circulation** /,lesə ,sɜ:kju'leɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* same as **pulmonary circulation**

**lesser trochanter** /,lesə trə'kæntə/ *noun* a projection on the femur which is the insertion of the psoas major muscle

**lesser vestibular gland** /,lesə ve'strɪbjələ glænd/ *noun* the more anterior of the vestibular glands

**lethal** /'li:θ(ə)l/ *adjective* killing or able to kill ○ *These fumes are lethal if inhaled.*

**lethal dose** /,li:θ(ə)l 'dəʊs/ *noun* the amount of a drug or other substance which will kill the person who takes it ○ *She took a lethal dose of aspirin.* Abbreviation **LD**

**lethal gene** /,li:θ(ə)l 'dʒi:n/, **lethal mutation** /,li:θ(ə)l mju:'teɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a gene, usually recessive, that results in the premature death of an individual who inherits it, e.g. the gene controlling sickle-cell anaemia

**lethargic** /lɪ'θɑ:dʒɪk/ *adjective* showing lethargy

**lethargy** /'leθədʒi/ *noun* a state in which someone is not mentally alert, has slow movements and is almost inactive

**Letterer-Siwe disease** /,letərə 'si:weɪ dɪ ,zɪ:z/ *noun* a usually fatal disease, most common in infants, caused by the overproduction of a specialised type of immune cell

**leucine** /'lu:si:n/ *noun* an essential amino acid

**leuco-** /lu:kəʊ/, **leuko-** *prefix* white

**leucocyte** /'lu:kəsaɪt/, **leukocyte** *noun* a white blood cell which contains a nucleus but has no haemoglobin

**leucocytolysis** /,lu:kəʊsaɪ'tələsɪs/, **leukocytolysis** /,lu:kəsaɪ'tələsɪs/ *noun* destruction of leucocytes

**leucocytosis** /,lu:kəʊsaɪ'təʊsɪs/, **leukocytosis** /,lu:kəsaɪ'təʊsɪs/ *noun* an increase in the numbers of leucocytes in the blood above the usual upper limit, in order to fight an infection

**leucoderma** /,lu:kəʊ'dɜ:mə/, **leukoderma** *noun* same as **vittiligo**

**leucolysin** /,lu:kəʊ'laɪsɪn/, **leukolysin** *noun* a protein which destroys white blood cells

**leuconychia** /,lu:kəʊ'nɪkiə/, **leukonychia** *noun* a condition in which white marks appear on the fingernails

**leucopenia** /,lu:kə'pi:niə/, **leukopenia** *noun* a reduction in the number of leucocytes in the blood, usually as the result of a disease

**leucoplakia** /,lu:kəʊ'plækiə/, **leukoplakia** *noun* a condition in which white patches form on mucous membranes, e.g. on the tongue or inside of the mouth

**leucopoiesis** /,lu:kəʊpəɪ'sɪs/, **leukopoiesis** *noun* the production of leucocytes

**leucorrhoea** /,lu:kə'ri:ə/, **leukorrhoea** *noun* an excessive discharge of white mucus from the vagina. Also called **whites** (NOTE: The US spelling is **leukorrhea**.)

**leukaemia** /lu:'ki:mɪə/ *noun* any of several malignant diseases where an unusual number of leucocytes form in the blood (NOTE: The US spelling is **leukemia**.)

**leuko-** /lu:kəʊ/ *prefix* same as **leuco-**

**levator** /lə'veɪtə/ *noun* **1.** a surgical instrument for lifting pieces of fractured bone **2.** a muscle which lifts a limb or a part of the body

**level of care** /,lev(ə)l əv 'keə/ *noun* any of the planned divisions within the system of health care which is offered by a particular organisation ○

*Our care homes offer six different levels of care to allow the greatest independence possible.*

**level one bed** /,lev(ə)l 'wʌn ,bed/ *noun* a bed occupied by a patient whose needs can be managed in a ward but who has an increased requirement for nursing support, e.g. a post-operative patient with fluctuating vital signs

**level three bed** /,lev(ə)l 'θri: ,bed/ *noun* a bed occupied by a patient whose needs should not be managed in a ward, e.g. a patient intubated following a cardiac arrest

**level two bed** /,lev(ə)l 'tu: ,bed/ *noun* a bed occupied by a patient whose needs would not normally be managed in a ward, e.g. a patient with a deteriorating condition awaiting transfer to a high-dependency unit

**levodopa** /,li:və'dəʊpə/ *noun* a natural chemical that stimulates the production of dopamine in the brain and is used to treat Parkinson's disease

**levonorgestrel** /,li:vəʊnɔ:'dʒestrəl/ *noun* an artificially produced female sex hormone, used mostly in birth control pills or capsules

**Leydig cells** /'laɪdɪg selz/ *plural noun* testosterone-producing cells between the tubules in the testes. Also called **interstitial cells** [Described 1850. After Franz von Leydig (1821–1908), Professor of Histology at Würzburg, Tübingen and then Bonn, Germany.]

**Leydig tumour** /'laɪdɪg ,tju:mə/ *noun* a tumour of the Leydig cells of the testis. It often releases testosterone, which makes young boys show early signs of maturing.

**l.g.v.** *abbreviation* lymphogranuloma venereum

**LH** *abbreviation* luteinising hormone

**libido** /lɪ'bi:dəʊ/ *noun* 1. the sexual urge 2. (*in psychology*) a force which drives the unconscious mind

**Librium** /'lɪbrɪəm/ a trade name for chlordiazepoxide

**lice** /laɪs/ *plural of louse*

**lichen** /'laɪkən/ *noun* a type of skin disease with thick skin and small lesions

**lichenification** /laɪ,kenɪfɪ'keɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a thickening of the skin at the site of a lesion

**lichen planus** /,laɪkən 'pleɪnəs/ *noun* a skin disease where itchy purple spots appear on the arms and thighs

**lid** /lɪd/ *noun* the top which covers a container ○ *a medicine bottle with a child-proof lid*

**lidocaine** /'laɪdəkeɪn/ *noun* US a drug used as a local anaesthetic. Also called **lignocaine**

**lie** /laɪ/ *noun* same as **lie of fetus** ■ *verb* to be in a flat position ○ *The accident victim was lying on the pavement.* ○ *Make sure the patient lies still and does not move.* (NOTE: **lying** – **lay** – **lain**)

**Lieberkühn's glands** /'li:bəku:nz glændz/ *plural noun* same as **crypts of Lieberkühn**

**lien-** /laɪən/ *prefix* spleen

**lienal** /'laɪən(ə)l/ *adjective* relating to or affecting the spleen ○ *the lienal artery*

**lienculus** /lə'eŋkjʊləs/ *noun* a small secondary spleen sometimes found in the body (NOTE: The plural is **lienculi**.)

**lienorenal** /,laɪənəʊ'rɪ:n(ə)l/ *adjective* relating to or affecting both the spleen and the kidneys

**lie of fetus** /,laɪ əv 'fɪ:təs/ *noun* the position of the fetus in the uterus ○ *Cause of rupture: abnormal lie of fetus.*

**life** /laɪf/ *noun* the quality that makes a person or thing alive and not dead or inorganic ○ *The surgeons saved the patient's life.* ○ *Her life is in danger because the drugs are not available.* ○ *The victim showed no sign of life.*

**life event** /'laɪf ɪ,vent/ *noun* a significant event which alters a person's status as regards taxation, insurance or employment benefits, e.g. the birth of a child or the onset of a disability

**life expectancy** /'laɪf ɪk,spektənsɪ/ *noun* the number of years a person of a particular age is likely to live

**life-support system** /,laɪf sə'pɔ:t ,sɪstəm/ *noun* a machine that takes over one or more vital functions such as breathing when someone is unable to survive unaided because of a disease or injury

**lift** /lɪft/ *noun* 1. a particular way of carrying an injured or unconscious person ○ *a four-handed lift* ○ *a shoulder lift* 2. a cosmetic operation to remove signs of age or to change a body feature ○ *a face lift*

**ligament** /'lɪgəmənt/ *noun* a thick band of fibrous tissue which connects the bones at a joint and forms the joint capsule

**ligate** /'laɪgeɪt/ *verb* to tie something with a ligature, e.g. to tie a blood vessel to stop bleeding or to tie the Fallopian tubes as a sterilisation procedure (NOTE: **ligating** – **ligated**)

**ligation** /laɪ'geɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a surgical operation to tie up a blood vessel

**ligature** /'lɪgətʃəl/ *noun* a thread used to tie vessels or a lumen, e.g. to tie a blood vessel to stop bleeding ■ *verb* same as **ligate** (NOTE: **ligaturing** – **ligatured**)

**light** /laɪt/ *adjective* 1. bright so that a person can see ○ *At six o'clock in the morning it was just getting light.* 2. referring to hair or skin which is very pale ○ *She has a very light complexion.* ○ *He has light-coloured hair.* 3. weighing a comparatively small amount ■ *noun* the energy that makes things bright and helps a person to see ○ *There's not enough light in here to take a photo.*

**light adaptation** /'laɪt ædæp,tɛɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* changes in the eye to adapt to an unusually bright or dim light or to adapt to light after being in darkness

**lightening** /'laɪtənɪŋ/ *noun* a late stage in pregnancy where the fetus goes down into the pelvic cavity

**lightning pains** /'laɪtnɪŋ peɪnz/ *plural noun* sharp pains in the legs in someone who has tabes dorsalis

**light reflex** /'laɪt ˌrɪːfleks/ *noun* same as **pupillary reaction**

**light therapy** /'laɪt ˌθerəpi/, **light treatment** /'laɪt ˌtriːtmənt/ *noun* the treatment of a disorder by exposing the person to light such as sunlight or infrared light

**lignocaine** /'lɪgnəkeɪn/ *noun* same as **lidocaine**

**limb** /lɪm/ *noun* one of the legs or arms

**limbic system** /'lɪmbɪk ˌsɪstəm/ *noun* a system of nerves in the brain, including the hippocampus, the amygdala and the hypothalamus, which are associated with emotions such as fear and anger

**limb lead** /'lɪm liːd/ *noun* an electrode attached to an arm or leg when taking an electrocardiogram

**limb lengthening** /'lɪm ˌleŋθənɪŋ/ *noun* a procedure in which an arm or a leg is made longer. Its bone is divided in two and new bone forms in the gap between the ends.

**limbus** /'lɪmbəs/ *noun* an edge, especially the edge of the cornea where it joins the sclera (NOTE: The plural is **limbi**.)

**liminal** /'lɪmɪn(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to a stimulus at the lowest level which can be sensed

**limp** /lɪmp/ *noun* a way of walking awkwardly because of pain, stiffness or malformation of a leg or foot ○ *She walks with a limp.* ■ *verb* to walk awkwardly because of pain, stiffness or malformation of a leg or foot ○ *He was still limping three weeks after the accident.*

**linctus** /'lɪŋktəs/ *noun* a sweet cough medicine

**linea nigra** /ˌlɪniə ˈnɑːgrə/ *noun* a dark line on the skin from the navel to the pubis which appears during the later months of pregnancy (NOTE: The plural is **lineae nigrae**.)

**linear** /'lɪniə/ *adjective* **1.** long and narrow in shape **2.** able to be represented by a straight line

**lingual** /'lɪŋgwəl/ *adjective* referring to the tongue

**lingual tonsil** /ˌlɪŋgwəl ˈtɒns(ə)l/ *noun* a mass of lymphoid tissue on the top surface of the back of the tongue

**lingula** /'lɪŋɡjʊlə/ *noun* a long thin piece of bone or other tissue ○ *the lingula of the left lung* (NOTE: The plural is **lingulae**.)

**lingular** /'lɪŋɡjʊlə/ *adjective* relating to a lingula

**liniment** /'lɪnɪmənt/ *noun* an oily liquid rubbed on the skin to ease the pain or stiffness of a sprain

or bruise by acting as a vasodilator or counterirritant. Also called **embrocation**

**lining** /'lɪnɪŋ/ *noun* a substance or tissue on the inside of an organ ○ *the thick lining of the aorta*

**link** /lɪŋk/ *verb* **1.** to join things together ○ *The ankle bone links the bones of the lower leg to the calcaneus.* **2.** to be related to or associated with something ○ *Health is linked to diet.*

**linkage** /'lɪŋkɪdʒ/ *noun* (of genes) the fact of being close together on a chromosome, and therefore likely to be inherited together

**linoleic acid** /ˌlɪnəʊliːk ˈæsɪd/ *noun* one of the essential fatty acids, found in grains and seeds

**linolenic acid** /ˌlɪnəʊˌlenɪk ˈæsɪd/ *noun* one of the essential fatty acids, found in linseed and other natural oils

**lint** /lɪnt/ *noun* thick flat cotton wadding, used as part of a surgical dressing

**lip** /lɪp/ *noun* **1.** each of two fleshy muscular parts round the edge of the mouth ○ *Her lips were dry and cracked.* **2.** same as **labium**

**lipaemia** /lɪˈpiːmiə/ *noun* an excessive amount of fat in the blood (NOTE: The US spelling is **lipemia**.)

**lipase** /'lɪpeɪz/ *noun* an enzyme which breaks down fats in the intestine. Also called **lipolytic enzyme**

**lipid** /'lɪpɪd/ *noun* an organic compound which is insoluble in water, e.g. a fat, oil or wax

**lipid metabolism** /ˌlɪpɪd məˈtæbəlɪz(ə)m/ *noun* the series of chemical changes by which lipids are broken down into fatty acids

**lipidosis** /ˌlɪpɪˈdɔːsɪs/ *noun* a disorder of lipid metabolism in which subcutaneous fat is not present in some parts of the body

**lipochondrodystrophy** /ˌlɪpəʊˌkɒndrəʊ ˈdɪstrəfi/ *noun* a congenital disorder affecting lipid metabolism, the bones and the main organs, causing learning difficulties and physical deformity

**lipodystrophy** /ˌlɪpəʊˈdɪstrəfi/ *noun* a disorder of lipid metabolism

**lipogenesis** /ˌlɪpəʊˈdʒenəsɪs/ *noun* the production or making of deposits of fat

**lipoid** /'lɪpɔɪd/ *noun* a compound lipid, or a fatty substance such as cholesterol which is like a lipid ■ *adjective* like a lipid

**lipoidosis** /ˌlɪpəʊˈdɔːsɪs/ *noun* a group of diseases with reticuloendothelial hyperplasia and unusual deposits of lipoids in the cells

**lipolysis** /lɪˈpɒlɪsɪs/ *noun* the process of breaking down fat by lipase

**lipolytic enzyme** /ˌlɪpəlɪtɪk ˈenzaim/ *noun* same as **lipase**

**lipoma** /lɪˈpəʊmə/ *noun* a benign tumour formed of fatty tissue (NOTE: The plural is **lipomas** or **lipomata**.)

**lipoprotein** /ˌlɪpəʊˈprəʊtiːn/ *noun* a protein which combines with lipids and carries them in the bloodstream and lymph system (NOTE: Lipoproteins are classified according to the percentage of protein which they carry.)

**liposuction** /ˌlɪpəʊˌsʌkʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the surgical removal of fatty tissue for cosmetic reasons

**lippping** /ˈlɪpɪŋ/ *noun* a condition in which bone tissue grows over other bones

**lip salve** /ˈlɪp sælv/ *noun* an ointment, usually sold as a soft stick, used to rub on lips to prevent them cracking

**liquid diet** /ˌlɪkwɪd ˈdaɪət/ *noun* a diet consisting only of liquids ◊ *The clear liquid diet is a temporary diet used in preparation for surgery.*

**liquid paraffin** /ˌlɪkwɪd ˈpærəfɪn/ *noun* an oil used as a laxative

**liquor** /ˈlɪkə/ *noun* (in pharmacy) a solution, usually aqueous, of a pure substance

**lisp** /lɪsp/ *noun* a speech condition in which someone replaces 's' sounds with 'th' ■ *verb* to talk with a lisp

**Listeria** /lɪˈstɪəriə/ *noun* a genus of bacteria found in domestic animals and in unpasteurised milk products which can cause uterine infection or meningitis

**listeriosis** /lɪˈstɪəriˈəʊsɪs/ *noun* an infectious disease transmitted from animals to humans by the bacterium *Listeria*

**listlessness** /ˈlɪstləsnəs/ *noun* the fact of being generally weak and tired

**liter** /ˈlɪːtə/ *noun* US spelling of **litre**

**lith-** /lɪθ/ *prefix* same as **litho-** (used before vowels)

**lithagogue** /ˈlɪθəɡɒɡ/ *noun* a drug which helps to remove stones from the urine

**lithiasis** /lɪˈθaɪəsɪs/ *noun* the formation of stones in an organ

**lithium** /ˈlɪθiəm/ *noun* a soft silver-white metallic element that forms compounds, used as a medical treatment for bipolar disorder

**litho-** /lɪθəʊ/ *prefix* referring to a calculus

**litholapaxy** /lɪˈθɒləpækəsi/ *noun* the evacuation of pieces of a stone in the bladder after crushing it with a lithotrite. Also called **lithotrity**

**lithonephrotomy** /ˌlɪθəʊnəˈfrɒtəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to remove a stone in the kidney (NOTE: The plural is **lithonephrotomies**.)

**lithotomy** /lɪˈθɒtəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to remove a stone from the bladder (NOTE: The plural is **lithotomies**.)

**lithotomy position** /lɪˈθɒtəmi pəˌzɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a position for some medical examinations in which the person lies on his or her back with the legs flexed and the thighs against the abdomen

**lithotripsy** /ˈlɪθətrɪpsi/ *noun* the process of breaking up kidney or gall bladder stones into

small fragments that the body can eliminate them unaided

**lithotrite** /ˈlɪθətraɪt/ *noun* a surgical instrument which crushes a stone in the bladder

**lithotrity** /lɪˈθɒtrɪti/ *noun* same as **litholapaxy**

**lithuresis** /ˌlɪθjʊˈriːsɪs/ *noun* the passage of small stones from the bladder during urination

**litmus** /ˈlɪtməs/ *noun* a substance which turns red in acid and blue in alkali

**litmus paper** /ˈlɪtməs ˌpeɪpə/ *noun* a small piece of paper impregnated with litmus, used to test for acidity or alkalinity

**litre** /ˈlɪːtə/ *noun* a unit of measurement of liquids equal to 1.76 pints. Abbreviation **l**, **L** (NOTE: With figures, usually written **l** or **L**: 2.5l, but it can be written in full to avoid confusion with the numeral 1. The US spelling is **liter**.)

**Little's area** /ˈlɪt(ə)lz ˌeəriə/ *noun* an area of blood vessels in the nasal septum

**Little's disease** /ˈlɪt(ə)lz dɪˌziːz/ *noun* same as **spastic diplegia** [Described 1843. After William John Little (1810–94), physician at the London Hospital, UK]

**liver** /ˈlɪvə/ *noun* a large gland in the upper part of the abdomen. See illustration at **DIGESTIVE SYSTEM** in Supplement (NOTE: For other terms referring to the liver, see words beginning with **hepat-**, **hepato-**.)

**liver fluke** /ˈlɪvə fluːk/ *noun* a parasitic flatworm which can infest the liver

**liver spot** /ˈlɪvə spɒt/ *noun* a little brown patch on the skin of the backs of the hands, attributed to sun damage (NOTE: Liver spots are unconnected with any liver disorder.)

**liver transplant** /ˈlɪvə ˌtrænsplɑːnt/ *noun* a surgical operation to give a person the liver of another person who has died

**livid** /ˈlɪvɪd/ *adjective* referring to skin with a blue colour because of being bruised or because of asphyxiation

**living will** /ˌlɪvɪŋ ˈwɪl/ *noun* a document signed by a person while in good health to specify the decisions he or she wishes to be taken about medical treatment if he or she becomes incapable of making or communicating them

**LMC** *abbreviation* local medical committee

**lobar** /ˈləʊbəl/ *adjective* referring to a lobe

**lobar bronchi** /ˌləʊbə ˈbrɒŋkiː/ *plural noun* air passages supplying a lobe of a lung. Also called **secondary bronchi**

**lobar pneumonia** /ˌləʊbə ˌnjuːˈməʊniə/ *noun* pneumonia which affects one or more lobes of the lung

**lobe** /ləʊb/ *noun* a rounded section of an organ such as the brain, lung or liver. See illustration at **LUNGS** in Supplement

**lobectomy** /ləʊ'bektəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to remove one of the lobes of an organ such as the lung ○ *The plural is lobectomies.*

**lobotomy** /ləʊ'bɒtəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation formerly used to treat mental illness by cutting into a lobe of the brain to cut the nerve fibres (NOTE: The plural is **lobotomies.**)

**lobular** /'lɒbjʊlə/ *adjective* relating to a lobule ○ *lobular carcinoma*

**lobule** /'lɒbjʊ:l/ *noun* a small section of a lobe in the lung, formed of acini

**local** /'ləʊk(ə)l/ *adjective* **1.** referring to a separate place **2.** confined to one part ■ *noun* same as **local anaesthetic**

**local anaesthesia** /,ləʊk(ə)l ænəs'thi:ziə/ *noun* loss of feeling in a single part of the body

**local anaesthetic** /,ləʊk(ə)l ænəs'tetɪk/ *noun* an anaesthetic such as lignocaine which removes the feeling in a single part of the body only ○ *The surgeon removed the growth under local anaesthetic.*

**localise** /'ləʊkəlaɪz/, **localize** *verb* **1.** to restrict the spread of something to a specific area **2.** to find where something is **3.** to transfer power from a central authority to local organisations (NOTE: **localising – localised**)

**localised** /'ləʊkəlaɪzd/, **localized** *adjective* referring to an infection which occurs in one part of the body only. Opposite **generalised**

**local supervising authority** /,ləʊk(ə)l 'sʊ:pəvaɪzɪŋ ɔ:,θɒrɪti/ *noun* an organisation which controls midwife services within its area

**lochia** /'lɒkiə/ *noun* a discharge from the vagina after childbirth or abortion

**lochiometra** /'lɒkiəmi:tɹə/ *noun* a condition in which lochia remains in the uterus after a baby is born, making it swollen

**lock** /lɒk/ *verb* to fix something in a position

**locked-in syndrome** /,lɒkt 'ɪn ,sɪndrəʊm/ *noun* a condition in which only the eyes and eyelids can move although the person is fully alert and conscious. It results from severe damage to the brain stem.

**locked knee** /,lɒkt 'ni:z/ *noun* a condition in which a piece of the cartilage in the knee slips out of position. The symptom is a sharp pain, and the knee remains permanently bent.

**locking joint** /,lɒkɪŋ 'dʒɔɪnt/ *noun* a joint which can be locked in an extended position, e.g. the knee or elbow

**lockjaw** /'lɒkjɔ:/ *noun* same as **tetanus** (*dated informal*)

**locomotion** /,ləʊkə'məʊʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the fact of being able to move

**locomotor** /,ləʊkə'məʊtə/ *adjective* relating to locomotion

**locomotor ataxia** /,ləʊkə,məʊtə ə'tæksɪə/ *noun* same as **tabes dorsalis**

**loculated** /'lɒkjʊletɪd/ *adjective* referring to an organ or a growth which is divided into many compartments ○ *a loculated renal abscess*

**locule** /'lɒkjʊ:l/ *noun* same as **loculus**

**loculus** /'lɒkjʊləs/ *noun* a small space in an organ (NOTE: The plural is **loculi.**)

**locum** /'ləʊkəm/ *noun* a healthcare professional such as a doctor or pharmacist who takes the place of another for a time. Also called **locum tenens**

**locum tenens** /,ləʊkəm 'tenənz/ *noun* same as **locum** (NOTE: The plural is **locum tenentes.**)

**locus** /'ləʊkəs/ *noun* **1.** an area or point where an infection or disease is to be found **2.** a position on a chromosome occupied by a gene (NOTE: The plural is **loci.**)

**lofepramine** /lɒ'feprəmi:n/ *noun* an antidepressant drug

**log roll** /'lɒg rəʊl/ *noun* a method of turning people in bed onto their side by putting them into a straight position and pulling on the sheet under them

**logrolling** /'lɒgrəʊlɪŋ/ *noun* the process of moving a person who is lying down into another position using the log roll method

**-logy** /lədʒɪ/ *suffix* **1.** science or study ○ *psychology* ○ *embryology* **2.** speech or expression

**loin** /lɔɪn/ *noun* the lower back part of the body above the buttocks

**Lomotil** /ləʊ'məʊtɪl/ a trade name for a preparation containing diphenoxalate

**longitudinal** /,lɒŋgɪ'tʃu:dɪn(ə)l/ *adjective* **1.** positioned lengthwise **2.** in the direction of the long axis of the body

**longitudinal arch** /,lɒŋgɪ'tʃu:dɪn(ə)l 'ɑ:tʃ/ *noun* same as **plantar arch**

**longitudinal lie** /,lɒŋgɪ'tʃu:dɪn(ə)l 'laɪ/ *noun* the usual position of a fetus, lying along the axis of the mother's body

**longitudinal study** /,lɒŋgɪ'tʃu:dɪn(ə)l 'stʌdi/ *noun* a study of individuals or groups of people and of how some aspect such as their health or education changes over a long time

**longsighted** /,lɒŋ'saɪtɪd/ *adjective* able to see clearly things which are far away but not things which are close

**longsightedness** /,lɒŋ'saɪtɪdnəs/ *noun* the condition of being longsighted. Also called **hypermetropia**

**loo** /lu:/ *noun* a toilet, or a room containing a toilet (*informal*) □ to go to the loo to urinate or defecate

**loop** /lu:p/ *noun* **1.** a curve or bend in a line, especially one of the particular curves in a fingerprint **2.** a curved piece of wire placed in the uterus to prevent contraception

**loop of Henle** /,lu:p əv 'henli/ *noun* a curved tube which forms the main part of a nephron in the kidney

**loperamide** /ləʊˈperəmaɪd/, **loperamide hydrochloride** /ləʊˌperəmaɪd ˌhaɪdrəʊˈklɔːraɪd/ *noun* a drug that relieves severe diarrhoea by slowing down the movements of the intestine

**loratidine** /lɔːˈrætɪdɪːn/ *noun* an antihistamine drug

**lorazepam** /lɔːˈræzɪpæm/ *noun* a mild tranquilliser that people often receive before surgery to lessen anxiety

**lordosis** /lɔːˈdɔʊsɪs/ *noun* excessive forward curvature of the lower part of the spine. ♀ **kyphosis**

**lordotic** /lɔːˈdɒtɪk/ *adjective* referring to lordosis

**lotion** /ˈləʊʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a medicinal liquid used to rub on the skin ○ a mild antiseptic lotion

**louse** /laʊs/ *noun* a small insect of the *Pediculus* genus, which sucks blood and lives on the skin as a parasite on animals and humans (NOTE: The plural is **lice**.)

**low-density lipoprotein** /ˌləʊ ˌdensɪti ˈlɪpəʊprəʊtɪːn/ *noun* a lipoprotein with a large percentage of cholesterol which deposits fats in muscles and arteries. Abbreviation **LDL**

**lower motor neurones** /ˌləʊə ˈməʊtə ˌnɜːrəʊnz/ *plural noun* linked neurones which carry motor impulses from the spinal cord to the muscles

**lozenge** /ˈlɒzɪndʒ/ *noun* a sweet medicinal tablet ○ *She was sucking a cough lozenge.*

**LRCP** *abbreviation* licentiate of the Royal College of Physicians

**LSA** *abbreviation* local supervising authority

**LSA** *abbreviation* lysergic acid diethylamide

**lubb-dupp** /ˌlʌb ˈdʌb/ *noun* two sounds made by the heart, which represent each cardiac cycle when heard through a stethoscope

**lubricant** /ˈluːbrɪkənt/ *noun* a fluid which lubricates

**lubricate** /ˈluːbrɪkeɪt/ *verb* to cover something with a fluid to reduce friction (NOTE: **lubricating** – **lubricated**)

**lucid** /ˈluːsɪd/ *adjective* with a clearly working mind ○ *In spite of the pain, he was still lucid.*

**lucid interval** /ˌluːsɪd ˈɪntəv(ə)l/ *noun* a period of clear thinking which occurs between two periods of unconsciousness or of mental illness

**lumbago** /lʌmˈbeɪɡəʊ/ *noun* pain in the lower back (*informal*) ○ *She has been suffering from lumbago for years.* ○ *He has had an attack of lumbago.*

**lumbar** /ˈlʌmbə/ *adjective* referring to the lower part of the back

**lumbar puncture** /ˈlʌmbə ˌpʌŋktʃə/ *noun* a surgical operation to remove a sample of cerebrospinal fluid by inserting a hollow needle into the

lower part of the spinal canal. Also called **spinal puncture**

**lumbar region** /ˈlʌmbə ˌrɪːdʒən/ *noun* the two parts of the abdomen on each side of the umbilical region

**lumbar vertebra** /ˌlʌmbə ˈvɜːtɪbrə/ *plural noun* each of the five vertebrae between the thoracic vertebrae and the sacrum

**lumbo-** /lʌmbəʊ/ *prefix* the lumbar region

**lumbosacral** /ˌlʌmbəʊˈseɪkrəl/ *adjective* referring to both the lumbar vertebrae and the sacrum

**lumbosacral joint** /ˌlʌmbəʊˈseɪkrəl ˌdʒɔɪnt/ *noun* a joint at the bottom of the back between the lumbar vertebrae and the sacrum

**lumen** /ˈluːmɪn/ *noun* **1.** an SI unit of light emitted per second **2.** the inside width of a passage in the body or of an instrument such as an endoscope

**lump** /lʌmp/ *noun* a mass of hard tissue which rises on the surface or under the surface of the skin ○ *He has a lump where he hit his head on the low door.* ○ *She noticed a lump in her right breast and went to see the doctor.*

**lumpectomy** /lʌmˈpektəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to remove a hard mass of tissue such as a breast tumour, leaving the surrounding tissue intact (NOTE: The plural is **lumpectomies**.)

**lunate** /ˈluːneɪt bæʊn/, **lunate bone** *noun* one of the eight small carpal bones in the wrist. See illustration at **HAND** in Supplement

**Lund and Browder chart** /ˌlʌnd ən ˈbraʊdə ˌtʃɑːt/ *noun* a chart for calculating the surface area of a burn

**lung** /lʌŋ/ *noun* one of two organs of respiration in the body into which air is sucked when a person breathes (NOTE: For other terms referring to the lungs, see words beginning with **bronch-**, **broncho-**, **pneum-**, **pneumo-**, **pneumon-**, **pneumono-**, **pulmo-**.)

**lunula** /ˈluːnjuːlə/ *noun* a curved white mark at the base of a fingernail (NOTE: The plural is **lunulae**.)

**lupus** /ˈluːpəs/ *noun* a persistent skin disease, of which there are several unrelated types

**lupus erythematosus** /ˌluːpəs ˌerɪθiːmə ˈtəʊsəs/ *noun* an inflammatory disease of connective tissue of which the more serious, systemic, form affects the heart, joints and blood vessels. Abbreviation **LE**

**lupus vulgaris** /ˌluːpəs ˌvʌlˈɡeərɪs/ *noun* a form of tuberculosis of the skin in which red spots appear on the face and become infected

**lutein** /ˈluːtiːn/ *noun* a yellow pigment in the corpus luteum

**luteinising hormone** /ˈluːtiːnaɪzɪŋ ˌhɔːməʊn/, **luteinizing hormone** *noun* a hormone produced by the pituitary gland, which stimulates the formation of the corpus luteum in females and of testosterone in males. Abbrevia-



tion **LH**. Also called **interstitial cell stimulating hormone**

**luteo-** /lu:tiəʊ/ *prefix* 1. yellow 2. corpus luteum

**luxation** /lʌk'seɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* same as **dislocation**

**Lyme disease** /'laɪm dɪ,zɪ:z/ *noun* a viral disease caused by *Borrelia burgdorferi* transmitted by bites from deer ticks. It causes rashes, nervous pains, paralysis and, in extreme cases, death.

**lymph** /lɪmf/ *noun* a colourless liquid containing white blood cells which circulates in the lymph system from all body tissues, carrying waste matter away from tissues to the veins. Also called **lymph fluid**

COMMENT: Lymph drains from the tissues through capillaries into lymph vessels. It is formed of water, protein and white blood cells (lymphocytes). Waste matter such as infection in the lymph is filtered out and destroyed as it passes through the lymph nodes, which then add further lymphocytes to the lymph before it continues in the system. It eventually drains into the brachiocephalic (innominate) veins, and joins the venous bloodstream. Lymph is not pumped round the body like blood but moves by muscle pressure on the lymph vessels and by the negative pressure of the large veins into which the vessels empty. Lymph is an essential part of the body's defence against infection.

**lymph-** /lɪmf/ *prefix meaning* same as **lympho-** (used before vowels)

**lymphaden-** /lɪmfædən/ *prefix* relating to the lymph nodes

**lymphadenectomy** /,lɪmfædə'nektəmi/ *noun* the surgical removal of a lymph node (NOTE: The plural is **lymphadenectomies**.)

**lymphadenitis** /,lɪmfædə'naitɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the lymph nodes

**lymphadenoma** /,lɪmfædə'nəʊmə/ *noun* same as **lymphoma**

**lymphadenopathy** /,lɪmfædə'nɒpəθi/ *noun* any unusual condition of the lymph nodes (NOTE: The plural is **lymphadenopathies**.)

**lymphangi-** /lɪmfændʒi/ *prefix* lymphatic vessel

**lymphangiectasis** /,lɪmfændʒi'ektəsis/ *noun* swelling of the smaller lymph vessels as a result of obstructions in larger vessels

**lymphangiography** /,lɪmfændʒi'ɒgrəfi/ *noun* an X-ray examination of the lymph vessels following introduction of radio-opaque material (NOTE: The plural is **lymphangiographies**.)

**lymphangioma** /,lɪmfændʒi'əʊmə/ *noun* a benign tumour formed of lymph tissues (NOTE: The plural is **lymphangiomas** or **lymphangiomata**.)

**lymphangioplasty** /lɪmf'ændʒɪəplæsti/ *noun* a surgical operation to make artificial lymph channels (NOTE: The plural is **lymphangioplasties**.)

**lymphangitis** /,lɪmfæ'n'dʒaɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the lymph vessels

**lymphatic** /lɪm'fætɪk/ *adjective* referring to lymph

**lymphatic capillary** /lɪm.fætɪk kə'pɪləri/ *plural noun* any of the capillaries which lead from tissue and join lymphatic vessels

**lymphatic duct** /lɪm'fætɪk dʌkt/ *noun* the main channel for carrying lymph

**lymphatic node** /lɪm'fætɪk nɔd/ *noun* same as **lymph gland**

**lymphatic nodule** /lɪm.fætɪk 'nɒdju:l/ *noun* a small lymph node found in clusters in tissues

**lymphatics** /lɪm'fætɪks/ *plural noun* lymph vessels

**lymphatic system** /lɪm'fætɪk ,sɪstəm/ *noun* a series of vessels which transport lymph from the tissues through the lymph nodes and into the bloodstream

**lymphatic vessel** /lɪm'fætɪk ,ves(ə)/ *noun* a tube which carries lymph round the body from the tissues to the veins

**lymph duct** /'lɪmf dʌkt/ *noun* any channel carrying lymph

**lymph gland** /'lɪmf glænd/, **lymph node** /'lɪmf nɔd/ *noun* a mass of lymphoid tissue situated in various points of the lymphatic system, especially under the armpits and in the groin, through which lymph passes and in which lymphocytes are produced. Also called **lymphatic node**

**lympho-** /lɪmfəʊ/ *prefix meaning* lymph

**lymphoblast** /'lɪmfəʊblæst/ *noun* an unusual cell which forms in acute lymphoblastic leukaemia as a result of the change which takes place in a lymphocyte on contact with an antigen

**lymphoblastic** /,lɪmfəʊ'blæstɪk/ *adjective* referring to lymphoblasts, or forming lymphocytes

**lymphocèle** /'lɪmfə:si:l/ *noun* a cyst containing lymph from injured or diseased lymph nodes or ducts

**lymphocyte** /'lɪmfəsəɪt/ *noun* a type of mature leucocyte or white blood cell formed by the lymph nodes and concerned with the production of antibodies

**lymphocytopenia** /,lɪmfəʊ,səɪtəʊ'pi:niə/ *noun* same as **lymphopenia**

**lymphocytosis** /,lɪmfəʊsəɪ'təʊsɪs/ *noun* an increased number of lymphocytes in the blood

**lymphoedema** /,lɪmfəʊ'di:mə/ *noun* a swelling caused by obstruction of the lymph vessels or unusual development of lymph vessels (NOTE: The US spelling is **lymphedema**.)

**lymphogranuloma venereum** /ˌlɪmfəʊˌgrænjʊləʊmə vəˈnɪərəm/ *noun* a sexually transmitted bacterial infection that causes swelling of the genital lymph nodes and, especially in men, a genital ulcer. Abbreviation **I.g.v.**

**lymphoid tissue** /ˌlɪmfɔɪd ˌtɪʃuː/ *noun* tissue in the lymph nodes, the tonsils and the spleen where masses of lymphocytes are supported by a network of reticular fibres and cells

**lymphokine** /ˌlɪmfəʊkaɪn/ *noun* a protein produced by lymphocytes that has an effect on other cells in the immune system. ⇔ **cytokine**

**lymphoma** /lɪmˈfəʊmə/ *noun* a malignant tumour arising from lymphoid tissue. Also called **lymphadenoma** (NOTE: The plural is **lymphomas** or **lymphomata**.)

**lymphopenia** /ˌlɪmfəʊˈpiːniə/ *noun* a reduction in the number of lymphocytes in the blood. Also called **lymphocytopenia**

**lymphopoiesis** /ˌlɪmfəʊpɔɪˈiːsɪs/ *noun* the production of lymphocytes or lymphoid tissue

**lymph vessel** /ˌlɪmf ˌves(ə)l/ *noun* one of the tubes which carry lymph round the body from the tissues to the veins

**lyophilisation** /laɪˌɒfɪlaɪˈzeɪʃ(ə)n/, **lyophilization** *noun* the act of preserving tissue, plasma or serum by freeze-drying it in a vacuum

**lysergic acid diethylamide** /laɪˌsɜːdʒɪk ˌæːsɪd dar'eθɪləmaɪd/ *noun* a powerful hallucinogenic drug which can cause psychosis. Abbreviation **LSD**

**lysin** /ˈlaɪsɪn/ *noun* **1.** a protein in the blood which destroys the cell against which it is directed **2.** a toxin which causes the lysis of cells

**lysine** /ˈlaɪsiːn/ *noun* an essential amino acid

**lysis** /ˈlaɪsɪs/ *noun* **1.** the destruction of a cell by a lysin, in which the membrane of the cell is destroyed **2.** a reduction in a fever or disease slowly over a period of time

**-lysis** /lɪsɪs/ *suffix* referring to processes which involve breaking up or decaying, or to objects which are doing this ○ *haemolysis*

**lysosome** /ˈlaɪsəsəʊm/ *noun* a particle in a cell which contains enzymes which break down substances such as bacteria which enter the cell

**lysozyme** /ˈlaɪsəzɪm/ *noun* an enzyme found in the whites of eggs and in tears, which destroys specific bacteria

# M

**m** *symbol* 1. metre 2. milli-

**M** *symbol* mega-

**MAAG** *abbreviation* medical audit advisory group

**maceration** /,mæsə'reɪf(ə)n/ *noun* the process of softening a solid by letting it lie in a liquid so that the soluble matter dissolves

**Mackenrodt's ligaments** /'mækən'rɒdʒ ,lɪgəmənts/ *plural noun* same as **cardinal ligaments**

**Macmillan nurse** /mæk'mɪlən nɜ:s/ *noun* a nurse who specialises in cancer care and is employed by the organisation Macmillan Cancer Relief

**macro-** /mækrəʊ/ *prefix* large. Opposite **micro-**  
**macrobiotic** /,mækrəʊbaɪ'ɒtɪk/ *adjective* referring to food which has been produced naturally without artificial additives or preservatives

**macrocephaly** /,mækrəʊ'kefəli/ *noun* the condition of having an unusually large head

**macrocheilia** /,mækrəʊ'keɪliə/ *noun* the condition of having large lips

**macrocyte** /'mækrəʊsaɪt/ *noun* an unusually large red blood cell found in people who have pernicious anaemia

**macrocythaemia** /mækrəʊsaɪ'thi:mia/ *noun* same as **macrocytosis**

**macrocytic** /,mækrəʊ'sɪtɪk/ *adjective* referring to macrocytes

**macrocytic anaemia** /,mækrəʊsɪtɪk ə 'ni:mia/ *noun* anaemia in which someone has unusually large red blood cells

**macrocytosis** /,mækrəʊsaɪ'təʊsɪs/ *noun* the condition of having macrocytes in the blood. Also called **macrocythaemia**

**macroductily** /,mækrəʊ'dæktɪli/ *noun* a condition in which a person has unusually large or long fingers or toes

**macroglobulin** /,mækrəʊ'glɒbjʊlɪn/ *noun* a class of immunoglobulin, a globulin protein of high molecular weight, which serves as an antibody

**macroglossia** /,mækrəʊ'glɒsia/ *noun* the condition of having an unusually large tongue

**macrognathia** /,mækrəʊ'neɪθiə/ *noun* a condition in which the jaw is larger than usual

**macromastia** /,mækrəʊ'mæstɪə/ *noun* overdevelopment of the breasts

**macronutrient** /'mækrəʊ,nju:triənt/ *noun* a substance which an organism needs in large amounts for normal growth and development, e.g. nitrogen, carbon or potassium. Compare **micronutrient**

**macrophage** /'mækrəʊfeɪdʒ/ *noun* any of several large cells which destroy inflammatory tissue, found in connective tissue, wounds, lymph nodes and other parts

**macroscopic** /,mækrəʊ'skɒpɪk/ *adjective* able to be seen with the naked eye

**macrosomia** /,mækrəʊ'səʊmia/ *noun* a condition in which the body grows too much

**macrostomia** /,mækrəʊ'stəʊmia/ *noun* a condition in which the mouth is too wide because the bones of the upper and lower jaw have not fused, either on one or on both sides

**macula** /'mækjʊlə/ *noun* 1. same as **macule** 2. a small coloured area, e.g. a macula lutea

**macula lutea** /,mækjʊlə 'lu:tiə/ *noun* a yellow spot on the retina, surrounding the fovea, the part of the eye which sees most clearly. Also called **yellow spot**

**macular** /'mækjʊlə/ *adjective* referring to a macula

**macular degeneration** /,mækjʊlə dɪ,dʒenə'reɪf(ə)n/ *noun* an eye disorder in elderly people in which fluid leaks into the retina and destroys cones and rods, reducing central vision

**macule** /'mækju:l/ *noun* a small flat coloured spot on the skin. Compare **papule**

**maculopapular** /,mækjʊləʊ'pæpjʊlə/ *adjective* made up of both macules and papules ○ *maculopapular rash*

**mad cow disease** /,mæd 'kau dɪ,zɪ:z/ *noun* same as **bovine spongiform encephalopathy** (*informal*)

**Magendie's foramen** /mə,dʒendɪz fə'reɪmən/ *noun* an opening in the fourth ventricle of the brain which allows cerebrospinal fluid to flow [Described 1828. After François Magendie

(1783–1855), French physician and physiologist.]

**magnesium** /mæg'nɪzɪəm/ *noun* a chemical element found in green vegetables, which is essential especially for the correct functioning of muscles (NOTE: The chemical symbol is **Mg**.)

**magnesium sulphate** /mæg,nɪ:zɪəm 'sʌlfeɪt/ *noun* a magnesium salt used as a laxative. Also called **Epsom salts**

**magnesium trisilicate** /mæg,nɪ:zɪəm traɪ 'sɪlɪkət/ *noun* a magnesium compound used to treat peptic ulcers

**magnetic** /mæg'netɪk/ *adjective* able to attract objects, like a magnet

**magnetic field** /mæg,netɪk 'fɪ:ld/ *noun* an area round an object which is under the influence of the magnetic force exerted by the object

**magnetic resonance imaging** /mæg,netɪk 'rezənəns ɪmɪdʒɪŋ/ *noun* a scanning technique which exposes the body to a strong magnetic field and uses the electromagnetic signals emitted by the body to form an image of soft tissue and cells. Abbreviation **MRI**

**magnum** /'mægnəm/ ♦ **foramen magnum**

**main bronchi** /,meɪn 'brɒŋki:/ *plural noun* the two main air passages which branch from the trachea outside the lung. Also called **primary bronchi**

**major surgery** /,meɪdʒə 'sɜ:dʒəri/ *noun* surgical operations involving important organs in the body

**mal** /mæl/ *noun* an illness or disease

**mal-** /mæl/ *prefix* bad or unusual

**malabsorption** /,mæləb'sɔ:pʃən/ *noun* a situation where the intestines are unable to absorb the fluids and nutrients in food properly

**malabsorption syndrome** /,mæləb'sɔ:pʃən ,sɪndrəʊm/ *noun* a group of symptoms and signs, including malnutrition, anaemia, oedema and dermatitis, which results from steatorrhoea and malabsorption of vitamins, protein, carbohydrates and water

**malacia** /mə'leɪʃə/ *noun* the pathological softening of an organ or tissue

**malaise** /mə'leɪz/ *noun* a feeling of discomfort

**malaligned** /,mælə'laɪnd/ *adjective* not in the correct position relative to other parts of the body

**malalignment** /,mælə'laɪnmənt/ *noun* a condition in which something is malaligned, especially in which a tooth is not in its correct position in the mouth

**malar** /'meɪlə/ *adjective* referring to the cheek

**malar bone** /'meɪlə bæʊn/ *noun* same as **cheekbone**

**malaria** /mə'leəriə/ *noun* a mainly tropical disease caused by a parasite *Plasmodium*, which enters the body after a bite from the female anopheles mosquito

**malarial** /mə'leəriəl/ *adjective* referring to malaria

**malarial parasite** /mə,leəriəl 'pærəsəɪt/ *noun* a parasite transmitted into the human bloodstream by the bite of the female anopheles mosquito

**malarial therapy** /mə'leəriə θerəpi/ *noun* a treatment in which a person is given a form of malaria in the belief that the high fevers they experience can stimulate the immune system to fight off serious diseases such as syphilis and HIV

**male menopause** /,meɪl 'menəʊə:z/ *noun* a period in middle age when a man may feel insecure and anxious about the fact that his physical powers are declining (*informal*)

**malformation** /,mælfɔ:'meɪf(ə)n/ *noun* an unusual variation in the shape, structure or development of something

**malfunction** /mæl'fʌŋkʃən/ *noun* a situation in which a particular organ does not work in the usual way ○ *Her loss of consciousness was due to a malfunction of the kidneys or to a kidney malfunction.*

**malignancy** /mə'ɪgnənsi/ *noun* **1.** the state of being malignant ○ *The tests confirmed the malignancy of the growth.* **2.** a cancerous growth (NOTE: The plural is **malignancies**.)

**malignant** /mə'ɪgnənt/ *adjective* likely to cause death or serious disablement if not properly treated

**malignant hypertension** /mə,ɪgnənt ,haɪpə'tenʃən/ *noun* dangerously high blood pressure

**malignant melanoma** /mə,ɪgnənt ,melə 'nəʊmə/ *noun* a dark tumour which develops on the skin from a mole, caused by exposure to strong sunlight

**malignant pustule** /mə,ɪgnənt 'pʌstju:l/ *noun* a pus-filled swelling that results from infection of the skin with anthrax

**malignant tumour** /mə,ɪgnənt 'tju:mə/ *noun* a tumour which is cancerous and can grow again or spread into other parts of the body, even if removed surgically. Opposite **benign tumour**

**malingerer** /mə'ɪŋgərə/ *noun* a person who pretends to be ill

**malingering** /mə'ɪŋgərɪŋ/ *adjective* the act of pretending to be ill

**malleolar** /mə'li:ələ/ *adjective* referring to a malleolus

**malleolus** /mə'li:ələs/ *noun* one of two bony prominences at each side of the ankle (NOTE: The plural is **malleoli**.)

**mallet finger** /,mæɪl 'fɪŋgə/ *noun* a finger which cannot be straightened because the tendon attaching the top joint has been torn

**malleus** /'mæliəs/ *noun* the largest of the three ossicles in the middle ear, shaped like a hammer. See illustration at **EAR** in Supplement

**Mallory bodies** /'mæləri ˌbɒdiz/ *plural noun* large irregular masses which occur in the cytoplasm of damaged liver cells, often a sign of an alcohol-related disease

**Mallory-Weiss syndrome** /,mæləri 'vaɪs ˌsɪndrəm/, **Mallory-Weiss tear** /,mæləri 'vaɪs ˌteə/ *noun* a condition in which there is a tearing in the mucous membrane where the stomach and oesophagus join, e.g. because of strain on them due to vomiting [Described 1929. After G. Kenneth Mallory (1900–86), Professor of Pathology, Boston University, USA; Konrad Weiss (1898–1942) US physician.]

**malnourished** /mæl'naɪft/ *adjective* not having enough to eat or having only poor-quality food, leading to ill-health

**malnutrition** /,mælnju'trɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a lack of food or of good-quality food, leading to ill-health

**malocclusion** /,mælə'klu:ʒ(ə)n/ *noun* a condition in which the teeth in the upper and lower jaws do not meet properly when the person's mouth is closed

**malodorous** /mæl'əʊdərəs/ *adjective* with a strong unpleasant smell

**Malpighian body** /mæl'pɪɡiən ˌbɒdi/, **Malpighian corpuscle** /mæl'pɪɡiən ˌkɔ:pəs(ə)l/ *noun* same as **renal corpuscle** [Described 1666. After Marcello Malpighi (1628–94), anatomist and physiologist in Rome and Bologna, Italy.]

**Malpighian glomerulus** /mæl'pɪɡiən glɒ'merʊləs/ *noun* same as **Bowman's capsule**

**Malpighian layer** /mæl'pɪɡiən ˌleɪə/ *noun* the deepest layer of the epidermis

**malposition** /,mælpə'zɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* an unusual or unexpected position of something such as a fetus in the uterus or fractured bones

**malpractice** /mæl'præktɪs/ *noun* illegal, unethical, negligent or immoral behaviour by a professional person, especially a healthcare professional ○ *The surgeon was found guilty of malpractice.*

**malpresentation** /,mælprez(ə)n'teɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* an unusual position of a fetus in the uterus just before it is ready to be born

**Malta fever** /'mɔ:ltə ˌfi:vəl/ *noun* same as **brucellosis**

**maltase** /'mɔ:lteɪz/ *noun* an enzyme in the small intestine which converts maltose into glucose

**maltose** /'mɔ:ltəʊs/ *noun* a sugar formed by digesting starch or glycogen

**malunion** /mæl'ju:njən/ *noun* a bad join of the pieces of a broken bone

**mamilla** /mə'mɪlə/ *noun* another spelling of **mammilla**

**mamillary** /'mæmɪl(ə)rɪ/ *adjective* another spelling of **mammillary**

**mamm-** /mæm/ *prefix* same as **mammo-** (used before vowels)

**mamma** /'mæmə/ *noun* same as **breast** (NOTE: The plural is **mammæ**.)

**mammary** /'mæməri/ *adjective* referring to the breast

**mammary gland** /'mæməri glænd/ *noun* a gland in female mammals which produces milk

**mammilla** /mə'mɪlə/, **mamilla** *noun* the protruding part in the centre of the breast, containing the milk ducts through which the milk flows. Also called **nipple**

**mammillary** /'mæmɪl(ə)rɪ/, **mamillary** *adjective* referring to the nipple

**mammo-** /mæməʊ/ *prefix* referring to breasts

**mammogram** /'mæməgræm/ *noun* a picture of a breast made using a special X-ray technique

**mammography** /mæ'mɒgrəfi/ *noun* examination of the breast using a special X-ray technique

**mammoplasty** /'mæməplæsti/ *noun* plastic surgery to alter the shape or size of the breasts

**Manchester operation** /'mæntɪʃtər ɒpə'reɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a surgical operation to correct downward movement of the uterus, involving removal of the cervix

**mandible** /'mændɪb(ə)l/ *noun* the lower bone in the jaw. Also called **lower jaw**

**mandibular** /mæn'dɪbjʊlə/ *adjective* referring to the lower jaw

**mane** /'meɪni/ *adverb* (used on prescriptions) during the daytime. Opposite **nocte**

**manganese** /'mæŋɡəni:z/ *noun* a metallic trace element (NOTE: The chemical symbol is **Mn**.)

**mania** /'meɪniə/ *noun* a state of bipolar disorder in which the person is excited, very sure of his or her own abilities and has increased energy

**-mania** /meɪniə/ *suffix* obsession with something

**maniac** /'meɪniæk/ *noun* a person who behaves in an uncontrolled way or is considered to have an obsession (NOTE: This term is regarded as offensive.)

**manic** /'mænik/ *adjective* referring to mania

**manic depression** /,mænik dɪ'preʃ(ə)n/ *noun* same as **bipolar disorder**

**manic-depressive** /,mænik dɪ'presɪv/ *adjective* relating to bipolar disorder ■ *noun* a person with bipolar disorder

**manic-depressive illness** /,mænik dɪ'presɪv ˌɪlnəs/, **manic-depressive psychosis** /,mænik dɪ'presɪv saɪ'kəʊsɪs/ *noun* same as **bipolar disorder**

**manifestation** /,mænɪf'eɪsteɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a sign, indication or symptom of a disease

**manipulation** /mə'nɪpjʊ'leɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a form of treatment that involves moving or rubbing

parts of the body with the hands, e.g. to treat a disorder of a joint

**manometer** /mə'nɒmɪtə/ *noun* an instrument for comparing pressures

**manometry** /mə'nɒmɪtri/ *noun* the measurement of pressures within organs of the body which contain gases or liquids, e.g. the oesophagus or parts of the brain

**Mantoux test** /'mæntuː test/ *noun* a test for tuberculosis, in which a person is given an intracutaneous injection of tuberculin. **Heaf test** [Described 1908. After Charles Mantoux (1877–1947), French physician.]

**manual** /'mænjʊəl/ *adjective* done by hand

**manubrium sterni** /mə'nʊ:brɪəm 'stɜ:nai/ *noun* the upper part of the sternum

**MAO** *abbreviation* monoamine oxidase

**MAOI** *abbreviation* monoamine oxidase inhibitor

**MAO inhibitor** /,em eɪ 'əʊ n,hibɪtə/ *noun* same as **monoamine oxidase inhibitor**

**maple syrup urine disease** /,mæɪp(ə)l 'sɪrəp 'jʊərɪn dɪ,zɪz/ *noun* an inherited condition caused by not having enough of a particular enzyme which helps the body to deal with amino acid. The urine smells like maple syrup. It can be fatal if not treated.

**marasmus** /mə'ræzməs/ *noun* a wasting disease which affects small children who have difficulty in absorbing nutrients or who are malnourished. Also called **failure to thrive**

**marble bone disease** /,mɑ:b(ə)l 'bəʊn dɪ,zɪz/ *noun* same as **osteopetrosis**

**march fracture** /'mɑ:tʃ ,fræktʃə/ *noun* a fracture of one of the metatarsal bones in the foot, caused by excessive exercise to which the body is not accustomed

**Marfan's syndrome** /'mɑ:fɑ:nz ,sɪndrəʊm/, **Marfan syndrome** /'mɑ:fɑ:n ,sɪndrəʊm/ *noun* a hereditary condition in which a person has extremely long fingers and toes, with disorders of the heart, aorta and eyes [Described 1896. After Bernard Jean Antonin Marfan (1858–1942), French paediatrician.]

**marijuana** /,mæɪrɪ'wɑ:nə/ *noun* same as **cannabis**

**marker** /'mɑ:kə/ *noun* **1.** something which acts an indicator of something else **2.** a substance introduced into the body to make internal structures clearer to X-rays

**marrow** /'mærəʊ/ *noun* soft tissue in cancellous bone. In young animals red marrow is concerned with blood formation while in adults it becomes progressively replaced with fat and is known as yellow marrow. Also called **bone marrow**. See illustration at **BONE STRUCTURE** in Supplement

**marsupialisation** /mɑ: ,su:piəlɑ:'zeɪf(ə)n/, **marsupialization** *noun* a surgical procedure in which the inside of a cyst is opened up so that the

cyst can be allowed to shrink gradually, because it cannot be cut out

**masculinisation** /,mæskjʊlɪnɑ:'zeɪf(ə)n/, **masculinization** *noun* the development of male characteristics such as body hair and a deep voice in a woman, caused by hormone deficiency or by treatment with male hormones

**Maslow's hierarchy of human needs** /,mæzləʊz ,hɑ:ɪrɑ:ki əv ,hju:mən 'ni:dz/ *noun* a system which explains human behaviour by organising human needs in order of priority, from basic ones such as eating to complex ones such as finding self-fulfilment, a higher level of motivation not being activated until the lesser needs have been satisfied

**masochism** /'mæsəkɪz(ə)m/ *noun* a sexual condition in which a person takes pleasure in being hurt or badly treated

**masochistic** /,mæsə'kɪstɪk/ *adjective* referring to masochism

**mass** /mæs/ *noun* **1.** a large quantity, e.g. a large number of people **2.** a body of matter with no clear shape

**massage** /'mæsɑ:ʒ/ *noun* a treatment for muscular conditions which involves rubbing, stroking or pressing the body with the hands **■ verb** to rub, stroke or press the body with the hands

**masseter** /mæ'si:tə/, **masseter muscle** /mæ'si:tə ,mæs(ə)l/ *noun* a muscle in the cheek which clenches the lower jaw making it move up, to allow chewing

**mast-** /mæst/ *prefix* same as **masto-** (used before vowels)

**mast cell** /'mæst sel/ *noun* a large cell in connective tissue, which carries histamine and reacts to allergens

**mastectomy** /mæ'stektəmi/ *noun* the surgical removal of a breast

**mastication** /,mæstɪ'keɪf(ə)n/ *noun* the act of chewing food

**mastitis** /mæ'staɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the breast

**masto-** /mæstəʊ/ *prefix* referring to a breast

**mastoid** /'mæstɔɪd/ *adjective* shaped like a nipple **■ noun** same as **mastoid process**

**mastoid air cell** /,mæstɔɪd 'eə ,sel/, **mastoid cell** /'mæstɔɪd sel/ *noun* an air cell in the mastoid process

**mastoid antrum** /,mæstɔɪd 'æntɾəm/ *noun* a cavity linking the air cells of the mastoid process with the middle ear

**mastoidectomy** /,mæstɔɪ'dektəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to remove part of the mastoid process, as a treatment for mastoiditis

**mastoiditis** /,mæstɔɪ'daɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the mastoid process and air cells. The symptoms are fever and pain in the ears.

**mastoid process** /,mæstɔɪd 'prəʊsɪs/ *noun* part of the temporal bone which protrudes at the side of the head behind the ear

**masturbation** /,mæstə'beɪf(ə)n/ *noun* stimulation of one's own genitals to produce an orgasm. Also called **onanism**

**mater** /'meɪtə/ ♀ **dura mater**

**materia medica** /mə,tɪəriə 'medɪkə/ *noun* the study of drugs or dosages as used in treatment (NOTE: It comes from a Latin term meaning 'medical substance'.)

**maternal** /mə'tɜ:n(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to a mother

**maternal death** /mə,tɜ:n(ə)l 'deθ/ *noun* the death of a mother during pregnancy, childbirth or up to twelve months after childbirth

**maternal deprivation** /mə,tɜ:n(ə)l ,deprɪ'veɪf(ə)n/ *noun* a psychological condition caused when a child does not have a proper relationship with a mother

**maternal dystocia** /mə,tɜ:n(ə)l dɪs'təʊsɪə/ *noun* difficult childbirth caused by a physical problem in the mother

**maternal instincts** /mə,tɜ:n(ə)l 'ɪnstɪŋkts/ *plural noun* instinctive feelings in a woman to look after and protect her child

**maternity** /mə'tɜ:nɪti/ *noun* childbirth, the fact of becoming a mother

**maternity clinic** /mə'tɜ:nɪti ,kɪlɪnɪk/ *noun* same as **antenatal clinic**

**maternity hospital** /mə'tɜ:nɪti ,hɒspɪt(ə)l/, **maternity ward** /mə'tɜ:nɪti wɔ:d/, **maternity unit** /mə'tɜ:nɪti ,ju:nɪt/ *noun* a hospital, ward or unit which deals only with women giving birth

**matrix** /'meɪtrɪks/ *noun* an amorphous mass of cells forming the basis of connective tissue. Also called **ground substance**

**matron** /'meɪtrən/ *noun* a title formerly given to a woman in charge of the nurses in a hospital. ♀ **modern matron**

**mattress suture** /'mætrəs ,su:tʃə/ *noun* a suture made with a loop on each side of the incision

**maturation** /,mætʃʊ'reɪf(ə)n/ *noun* the process of becoming mature or fully developed

**mature** /mə'tʃʊə/ *adjective* fully developed

**mature follicle** /mə,tʃʊə 'fɒlɪk(ə)l/ *noun* a Graafian follicle just before ovulation

**maturing** /mə'tʃʊərɪŋ/ *adjective* becoming mature

**maxilla** /mæk'sɪlə/, **maxilla bone** /mæk'sɪlə bəʊn/ *noun* the upper jaw bone (NOTE: The plural is **maxillae**. It is more correct to refer to the upper jaw as the **maxillae**, as it is in fact formed of two bones which are fused together.)

**maxillary** /mæk'sɪləri/ *adjective* referring to the maxilla

**maxillary antrum** /mæk,sɪləri 'ænrəm/, **maxillary air sinus** /mæk,sɪləri 'eə ,sɪnəs/ *noun* one of two sinuses behind the cheekbones in the upper jaw. Also called **antrum of Highmore**

**maxillo-facial** /mæk,sɪləʊ'feɪf(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to the maxillary bone and the face ○ **maxillo-facial surgery**

**MB** *abbreviation* bachelor of medicine

**McBurney's point** /mæk,bɜ:nɪz 'pɔɪnt/ *noun* a point which indicates the usual position of the appendix on the right side of the abdomen, between the hip bone and the navel, which is extremely painful if pressed when the person has appendicitis [Described 1899. After Charles McBurney (1845–1913), US surgeon.]

**McNaghten's Rules on Insanity at Law** /mæk,nɔ:tənz ,ru:lz ɒn ɪn,sænɪti ət 'lɔ:/, **McNaghten's Rules** /mæk'nɔ:tənz ,ru:lz/ *plural noun* a set of principles which explain how people can defend themselves in law by claiming that they committed a murder because they were mentally ill, and therefore not responsible for any of their actions. In 1957 it was adapted to include the idea of knowing that an action is wrong but being unable to stop yourself from committing it because of your mental condition.

**MCP joint** /,em si: 'pi: ,dʒɔɪnt/ *noun* same as **metacarpophalangeal joint**

**MCU, MCFG** *abbreviation* micturating cysto(-urethro)gram

**MD** *abbreviation* doctor of medicine

**ME** *abbreviation* myalgic encephalomyelitis

**measles** /'mi:z(ə)lz/ *noun* an infectious disease of children, where the body is covered with a red rash ○ *She's in bed with measles.* ○ *He's got measles.* ○ *They caught measles from their friend at school.* ○ *Have you had the measles?* Also called **morbilli**, **rubeola** (NOTE: Takes a singular or plural verb.)

**meat-** /'meɪt/ *prefix* relating to a meatus

**meatus** /mi'eɪtəs/ *noun* an opening leading to an internal passage in the body, e.g. the urethra or the nasal cavity (NOTE: The plural is **meatuses** or **meatus**.)

**mechanism** /'mekənɪz(ə)m/ *noun* 1. a physical or chemical change by which a function is carried out 2. a system in the body which carries out or controls a particular function ○ *The inner ear is the body's mechanism for the sense of balance.*

**mechanism of labour** /,mekənɪz(ə)m əv 'leɪbə/ *noun* all the forces and processes which combine to push a foetus out of the uterus during its birth, together with the ones which oppose it

**mechanotherapy** /,mekənəʊ'terəpi/ *noun* the treatment of injuries through mechanical means, such as massage and exercise machines

**meconium** /'mekəʊnɪz(ə)m/ *noun* poisoning by opium or morphine

**meconium** /mɪ'kəʊniəm/ *noun* the first dark green faeces produced by a newborn baby

**media** /'mi:diə/ *noun* same as **tunica media**

**medial** /'mi:diəl/ *adjective* nearer to the central midline of the body or to the centre of an organ. Compare **lateral**

**medially** /'mi:diəli/ *adverb* towards or on the sagittal plane of the body. See illustration at **ANATOMICAL TERMS** in Supplement

**medial malleolus** /,mi:diəl mə'li:ələs/ *noun* a bone at the end of the tibia which protrudes at the inside of the ankle

**median** /'mi:diən/ *adjective* towards the central midline of the body, or placed in the middle

**median nerve** /'mi:diən nə:z/ *noun* one of the main nerves of the forearm and hand

**median plane** /'mi:diən pleɪn/ *noun* an imaginary flat surface on the midline and at right angles to the coronal plane, which divides the body into right and left halves. See illustration at **ANATOMICAL TERMS** in Supplement

**mediastinal** /,mi:diə'staɪn(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to the mediastinum ○ *the mediastinal surface of pleura or of the lungs*

**mediastinitis** /,mi:diəstɪ'naitɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the mediastinum

**mediastinoscopy** /,mi:diəstɪ'nɒskəpi/ *noun* an operation in which a tube is put into the mediastinum so that its organs can be examined

**mediastinum** /,mi:diə'staɪnəm/ *noun* the section of the chest between the lungs, where the heart, oesophagus and phrenic and vagus nerves are situated

**medic** /'medɪk/ *noun* a doctor or medical student (*informal*)

**medical** /'medɪk(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to the study of diseases ○ *a medical student* ■ *noun* an official examination of a person by a doctor ○ *He wanted to join the army, but failed his medical.* ○ *You will have to have a medical if you take out an insurance policy.*

**medical alert bracelet** /,medɪk(ə)l ə'ɪlɜ:t ,breɪslət/ *noun* a band or chain worn around the wrist giving information about the wearer's medical needs, allergies or condition

**medical assistant** /'medɪk(ə)l ə,sɪst(ə)nt/ *noun* someone who performs routine administrative and clinical tasks to help in the offices and clinics of doctors and other medical practitioners

**medical audit** /,medɪk(ə)l 'ɔ:dɪt/ *noun* a systematic critical analysis of the quality of medical care provided to a person, which examines the procedures used for diagnosis and treatment, the use of resources and the resulting outcome and quality of life for the person

**medical audit advisory group** /,medɪk(ə)l ,ɔ:dɪt əd'vaɪz(ə)ri ,gru:p/ *noun* a body with the responsibility of advising on medical audit in primary care. Abbreviation **MAAG**

**medical certificate** /'medɪk(ə)l sə,tɪfɪkət/ *noun* an official document signed by a doctor, giving someone permission to be away from work or not to do specific types of work

**medical committee** /'medɪk(ə)l kə,mɪti/ *noun* a committee of doctors in a hospital who advise the management on medical matters

**medical doctor** /'medɪk(ə)l ,dɒktə/ *noun* a doctor who practises medicine, but is not usually a surgeon

**medical ethics** /,medɪk(ə)l 'eθɪks/ *plural noun* the moral and professional principles which govern how doctors and nurses should work, and, in particular, what type of relationship they should have with their patients

**medical examination** /,medɪk(ə)l ɪg,zæmɪ 'neɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* an examination of a person by a doctor

**medical history** /,medɪk(ə)l 'hɪst(ə)ri/ *noun* the details of a person's medical condition and treatment over a period of time

**medical intervention** /,medɪk(ə)l ,ɪntə 'venʃən/ *noun* the treatment of illness by drugs

**medicalisation** /,medɪkəlaɪ'zeɪʃ(ə)n/, **medicalization** *noun* the act of looking at something as a medical issue or problem

**medical jurisprudence** /,medɪk(ə)l ,dʒʊərəs 'pru:d(ə)nɪs/ *noun* the use of the principles of law as they relate to the practice of medicine and the relationship of doctors with each other, their patients and society. † **forensic medicine**

**Medical Officer of Health** /,medɪk(ə)l ,ɒfɪsər əv 'helθ/ *noun* formerly, a local government official in charge of the health services in an area. Abbreviation **MOH**

**medical practitioner** /,medɪk(ə)l præk 'tɪʃ(ə)nəl/ *noun* a person qualified in medicine, i.e. a doctor or surgeon

**medical profession** /'medɪk(ə)l prə,fɛʃ(ə)n/ *noun* all doctors

**Medical Register** /,medɪk(ə)l 'redʒɪstə/ *noun* a list of doctors approved by the General Medical Council ○ *The committee ordered his name to be struck off the Medical Register.*

**Medical Research Council** /,medɪk(ə)l rɪ 'sɜ:tʃ ,kaʊnsəl/ *noun* a government body which organises and pays for medical research. Abbreviation **MRC**

**medical school** /'medɪk(ə)l sku:l/ *noun* a section of a university which teaches medicine ○ *He is at medical school.*

**medical secretary** /,medɪk(ə)l 'sekɪtri(ə)ri/ *noun* a qualified secretary who specialises in medical documentation, either in a hospital or in a doctor's surgery

**medical social worker** /,medɪk(ə)l 'səʊʃ(ə)l ,wɜ:kə/ *noun* someone who helps people with family problems or problems related to their work



which may have an effect on their response to treatment

**medical ward** /'medɪk(ə)l wɔ:d/ *noun* a ward for people who do not have to undergo surgical operations

**Medicare** /'medɪkə/ *noun* a system of public health insurance in the US

**medicated** /'medɪkeɪtɪd/ *adjective* containing a medicinal drug ○ *medicated cough sweet*

**medicated shampoo** /,medɪkeɪtɪd ʃæm'pu:/ *noun* a shampoo containing a chemical which is supposed to prevent dandruff

**medication** /,medɪ'keɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* **1.** the treatment of illnesses by giving people drugs. ◇ **pre-medication** **2.** a drug used to treat a particular illness ○ *What sort of medication has she been taking?* ○ *80% of elderly patients admitted to geriatric units are on medication.*

**medicinal** /mə'dɪs(ə)n(ə)l/ *adjective* which has healing properties or a beneficial effect on someone's health ○ *He has a drink of whisky before he goes to bed for medicinal purposes.*

**medicinal leech** /mə,dɪs(ə)n(ə)l'li:tʃ/ *noun* a leech which is raised specially for use in medicine

**medicine** /'med(ə)s(ə)n/ *noun* **1.** a preparation taken to treat a disease or condition, especially one in liquid form ○ *Take some cough medicine if your cough is bad.* ○ *You should take the medicine three times a day.* **2.** the study of diseases and how to cure or prevent them ○ *She is studying medicine because she wants to be a doctor.*

**medicine cabinet** /'med(ə)s(ə)n ,kæbɪnət/,

**medicine chest** /'med(ə)s(ə)n tʃest/ *noun* a cupboard where medicines, bandages, thermometers and other pieces of medical equipment can be left locked up, but ready for use in an emergency

**medico** /'medɪkəʊ/ *noun* a doctor (*informal*) ○ *The medico said I was perfectly fit.*

**medico-** /'medɪkəʊ/ *prefix* referring to medicine or to doctors

**medicochirurgical** /,medɪkəkəʊkərɪ'tʃɜ:ʒɪk(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to both medicine and surgery

**medicolegal** /,medɪkəkəʊ'li:g(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to both medicine and the law

**medicosocial** /,medɪkəkəʊ'səʊʃ(ə)l/ *adjective* involving both medical and social factors

**medium** /'mi:diəm/ *adjective* average, in the middle or at the halfway point ■ *noun* a substance through which something acts

**medroxyprogesterone** /mə'drɒksɪprəʊ'dʒestərəʊn/ *noun* a synthetic hormone used to treat menstrual disorders, in oestrogen replacement therapy and as a contraceptive

**medulla** /me'dʌlə/ *noun* the soft inner part of an organ, as opposed to the outer cortex. See illustration at **KIDNEY** in Supplement

**medulla oblongata** /me,dʌlə ,ɒblŋŋ'geɪtə/ *noun* a continuation of the spinal cord going through the foramen magnum into the brain

**medullary** /me'dʌləri/ *adjective* similar to marrow

**medullary cavity** /me,dʌləri 'kævɪti/ *noun* a hollow centre of a long bone, containing bone marrow. See illustration at **BONE STRUCTURE** in Supplement

**medullated nerve** /'medəleɪtɪd nɜ:v/ *noun* a nerve surrounded by a myelin sheath

**mefenamic acid** /,mefənæmɪk 'æsɪd/ *noun* a drug which reduces inflammation and pain, used in the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis and menstrual problems

**mefloquine** /'mefləkwɪ:n/, **mefloquine hydrochloride** /,mefləkwɪ:n ,haɪdrəʊ 'klɔ:raɪd/ *noun* a drug used in the prevention and treatment of malaria

**mega-** /megə/ *prefix* **1.** large. Opposite **micro-** **2.** one million, or 10<sup>6</sup>

**megacolon** /,megə'kəʊlən/ *noun* a condition in which the lower colon is very much larger than normal, because part of the colon above is constricted, making bowel movements impossible

**megajoule** /'megədʒu:l/ *noun* a unit of measurement of energy equal to one million joules. Symbol **Mj**

**megakaryocyte** /,megə'kæriəsaɪt/ *noun* a bone marrow cell which produces blood platelets

**megalo-** /megələʊ/ *prefix* large

**megaloblast** /'megələʊblæst/ *noun* an unusually large blood cell found in the bone marrow of people who have some types of anaemia caused by Vitamin B<sub>12</sub> deficiency

**megaloblastic anaemia** /,megələʊblæstɪk ə'ni:miə/ *noun* anaemia caused by Vitamin B<sub>12</sub> deficiency

**megalocyte** /'megələʊsaɪt/ *noun* an unusually large red blood cell, found in pernicious anaemia

**megalomania** /,megələʊ'meɪniə/ *noun* a psychiatric disorder in which a person believes they are very powerful and important

**megalomaniac** /,megələʊ'meɪniæk/ *noun* someone who has megalomania ■ *adjective* having megalomania

**-megaly** /megəli/ *suffix* enlargement

**megaureter** /,megəjʊ'reɪtə/ *noun* a condition in which a part of the ureter becomes very wide, above the site of a blockage

**meibomian cyst** /maɪ,bəʊmɪən 'sɪst/ *noun* the swelling of a sebaceous gland in the eyelid. Also called **chalazion**

**meibomian gland** /maɪ,bəʊmɪən ,glænd/ *noun* a sebaceous gland on the edge of the eyelid which secretes a liquid to lubricate the eyelid. Also called **tarsal gland**

**meibomianitis** /maɪ,bəʊmiə'nartɪs/ *noun* a condition in which the meibomian glands become swollen

**Meigs' syndrome** /'megz,sɪndrəʊm/ *noun* a condition in which liquid collects in the chest and abdominal cavities. It is associated with pelvic tumours.

**meiosis** /maɪ'əʊsɪs/ *noun* the process of cell division which results in two pairs of haploid cells, i.e. cells with only one set of chromosomes. Compare **mitosis**

**Meissner's corpuscle** /,maɪsnəz 'kɔ:pəs(ə)l/ *noun* a receptor cell in the skin which is thought to be sensitive to touch

**Meissner's plexus** /,maɪsnəz 'pleksəs/ *noun* a network of nerve fibres in the wall of the alimentary canal [Described 1853. After Georg Meissner (1829–1905), German anatomist and physiologist.]

**melaena** /mə'li:nə/ *noun* black faeces where the colour is caused by bleeding in the intestine

**melan-** /melən/ *prefix* same as **melano-** (used before vowels)

**melancholia** /,melən'kəʊliə/ *noun* a severe depressive illness occurring usually between the ages of 45 and 65

**melanin** /'melənɪn/ *noun* a dark pigment which gives colour to skin and hair, also found in the choroid of the eye and in some tumours

**melano-** /melənəʊ/ *prefix* black or dark

**melanocyte** /'melənəʊsaɪt/ *noun* any cell which carries pigment

**melanocyte-stimulating hormone** /,melənəʊsaɪt 'stɪmjəleɪtɪŋ,hɔ:məʊm/ *noun* a hormone produced by the pituitary gland which causes darkening in the colour of the skin. Abbreviation **MSH**

**melanoma** /,melə'nəʊmə/ *noun* a tumour formed of dark pigmented cells

**melatonin** /,melə'təʊnɪn/ *noun* a hormone produced by the pineal gland during the hours of darkness, which makes animals sleep during the winter months. It is thought to control the body's rhythms.

**melena** /mə'li:nə/ *noun* same as **melaena**

**mellitus** /'melɪtəs/ ♦ **diabetes mellitus**

**membrane** /'membreɪn/ *noun* a thin layer of tissue which lines or covers an organ

**membranous** /'membɾənəs/ *adjective* referring to membranes, or like a membrane

**membranous labyrinth** /,membɾənəs 'læbərɪnθ/ *noun* a series of ducts and canals formed of membrane inside the osseous labyrinth

**menarche** /mə'nɑ:kɪ/ *noun* the start of menstrual periods

**Mendel's laws** /'mendəlz lɔ:z/ *plural noun* the laws of heredity, that are the basis of the science of genetics [Described 1865. After Gregor

Johann Mendel (1822–84), Austrian Augustinian monk and naturalist of Brno, whose work was rediscovered by de Vries in 1900.]

**Ménière's disease** /meni'eəz dɪ:zi:z/, **Ménière's syndrome** /'sɪndrəʊm/ *noun* a disease of the middle ear, in which someone becomes dizzy, hears ringing in the ears and may vomit, and becomes progressively deaf. The causes may include infections or allergies, which increase the fluid contents of the labyrinth in the middle ear. [Described 1861. After Prosper Ménière (1799–1862) and his son, Emile Antoine Ménière (1839–1905), French physicians.]

**mening-** /menɪndʒ/ *prefix* same as **meningo-** (used before vowels)

**meningeal** /me'nɪndʒiəl/ *adjective* referring to the meninges

**meninges** /me'nɪndʒi:z/ *plural noun* the membranes which surround the brain and spinal cord (NOTE: The singular is **meninx**.)

**meningioma** /,menɪndʒi'əʊmə/ *noun* a benign tumour in the meninges

**meningism** /me'nɪndʒɪz(ə)m/ *noun* a condition in which there are signs of meningeal irritation suggesting meningitis, but where there is no pathological change in the cerebrospinal fluid

**meningitis** /,menɪn'dʒaɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the meninges, causing someone to have violent headaches, fever, and stiff neck muscles, and sometimes to become delirious

**meningo-** /mənɪŋgəʊ/ *prefix* referring to the meninges

**meningocele** /mə'nɪŋgəʊsi:l/ *noun* a condition in which the meninges protrude through the vertebral column or skull

**meningococcal** /mə'nɪŋgəʊ'kɒk(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to meningococci

**meningococcal meningitis** /mə'nɪŋgəʊ 'kɒk(ə)l ,menɪn'dʒaɪtɪs/ *noun* the commonest epidemic form of meningitis, caused by a bacterium *Neisseria meningitidis*, where the meninges become inflamed causing headaches and fever

**meningococcus** /mə'nɪŋgəʊ'kɒkəs/ *noun* the bacterium *Neisseria meningitidis* which causes meningococcal meningitis (NOTE: The plural is **meningococci**.)

**meningoencephalitis** /mə'nɪŋgəʊɛn,kefə 'laɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the meninges and the brain

**meningoencephalocoele** /mə'nɪŋgəʊɛn 'kefələʊsi:l/ *noun* a condition in which part of the meninges and the brain push through a gap in the skull

**meningomyelocoele** /mə'nɪŋgəʊ 'maɪələʊsi:l/ *noun* the pushing forward of part of the meninges and spinal cord through a gap in the spine. Also called **myelomeningocele**, **myelocoele**

**meninx** /'meniŋks/ *noun* ♦ **meninges**

**meniscectomy** /,meni'sektəmi/ *noun* the surgical removal of a cartilage from the knee

**meniscus** /mə'nɪskəs/ *noun* one of two pads of cartilage, the lateral meniscus and medial meniscus, between the femur and tibia in a knee joint. Also called **semilunar cartilage** (NOTE: The plural is **menisci**.)

**meno-** /menəʊ/ *prefix* referring to menstruation

**menopause** /'menəʊpə:z/ *noun* a period, usually between 45 and 55 years of age, when a woman stops menstruating and can no longer bear children. Also called **climacteric**, **change of life**

**menorrhagia** /,menə'reɪdʒiə/ *noun* very heavy bleeding during menstruation. Also called **flooding**

**menses** /'mensi:z/ *plural noun* same as **menstruation**

**menstrual** /'menstruəl/ *adjective* referring to menstruation

**menstrual cramp** /,menstruəl 'kræmp/ *noun* a cramp in the muscles round the uterus during menstruation

**menstrual cycle** /'menstruəl ,saɪk(ə)/ *noun* a period, usually of 28 days, during which a woman ovulates, the walls of the uterus swell and bleeding takes place if the ovum has not been fertilised

**menstrual flow** /'menstruəl fləʊ/ *noun* the discharge of blood from the uterus during menstruation

**menstruate** /'menstruət/ *verb* to bleed from the uterus during menstruation

**menstruation** /,menstru'eɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* bleeding from the uterus which occurs in a woman each month when the lining of the uterus is shed because no fertilised egg is present

**mental** /'ment(ə)/ *adjective* **1.** referring to the mind **2.** referring to the chin

**mental aberration** /,ment(ə)l ,æbə'reɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* slight forgetfulness or confusion (often humorous) ○ *I thought the meeting was at 11 – I must have had a mental aberration.*

**mental age** /,ment(ə)l 'eɪdʒ/ *noun* a measurement based on intelligence tests that shows a person's intellectual development, usually compared to standardised data for a chronological age □ **he's nine, but he has a mental age of five** although he is nine years old, his level of intellectual development is the same as that of an average child of five

**mental block** /,ment(ə)l 'blɒk/ *noun* a temporary inability to remember something, caused by the effect of nervous stress on the mental processes

**Mental Capacity Act** /,ment(ə)l kə'pæsɪti ,ækt/ *noun* a piece of UK legislation, introduced in 2007, that establishes five principles in relation to mental capacity and medical treatment, namely that patients should be assumed to be capable of

making their own decisions, that they should be given support in decision-making, that it is patients' capacity to make decisions that should be judged, not the decisions themselves, that treatment must be in patients' best interests, and that treatment should restrict rights and freedoms as little as possible

**mental deficiency** /,ment(ə)l drɪ'fɪʃ(ə)nsi/ *noun* a former term for learning disability (NOTE: This term is regarded as offensive.)

**mental development** /,ment(ə)l drɪ'veləpmənt/ *noun* the development of the mind ○ *Her mental development is higher than usual for her age.*

**mental disorder** /,ment(ə)l dɪs'ɔ:də/ *noun* a temporary or permanent change in a person's mental state which makes them function less effectively than they would usually, or than the average person would be expected to function

**mental faculties** /,ment(ə)l 'fækəlti:z/ *plural noun* abilities such as thinking and decision-making ○ *There has been no impairment of the mental faculties.*

**mental handicap** /,ment(ə)l 'hændɪkæp/ *noun* a former term for learning disability (NOTE: This term is regarded as offensive.)

**mental health** /'ment(ə)l helθ/ *noun* the condition of someone's mind

**Mental Health Acts** /,ment(ə)l 'helθ ækts/ *plural noun* laws made by a parliament which lay down rules for the care of people with mental illness

**Mental Health Review Tribunal** /,ment(ə)l helθ rɪ'vju: trarɪ'bju:n(ə)l/ *noun* a committee which makes decisions about whether people who have been detained under the Mental Health Acts should be released. It consists of medical members, legal experts and lay members, who include people with experience in social services. Abbreviation **MHRT**

**mental hospital** /'ment(ə)l ,hɒspɪt(ə)l/ *noun* a psychiatric hospital (NOTE: This term is regarded as offensive.)

**mental illness** /,ment(ə)l 'ɪlnəs/ *noun* any disorder which affects the mind

**mental impairment** /,ment(ə)l ɪm'peəmənt/ *noun* a temporary or permanent condition which affects a person's mental state, making them function less effectively than they would usually, or than the average person would be expected to function

**mentally** /'ment(ə)li/ *adverb* in the mind ○ *Mentally, she is very advanced for her age.*

**mentally handicapped** /,ment(ə)li 'hændɪkæpt/ *adjective* a former term for someone with learning disability (NOTE: This term is usually regarded as offensive.)

**mentally ill** /,ment(ə)li 'ɪl/ *adjective* experiencing mental illness

**mental nerve** /'ment(ə)l nɜːv/ *noun* a nerve which supplies the chin

**mental patient** /'ment(ə)l ,peɪfj(ə)nt/ *noun* a former term of a patient who has mental illness (NOTE: This term is regarded as offensive.)

**mental retardation** /,ment(ə)l ,rɪtɑː'teɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a former term for learning disability, a condition that results in someone finding it difficult to learn skills or information at the same rate as others of a similar age (NOTE: This term is regarded as offensive.)

**mental subnormality** /,ment(ə)l ,sʌbnɔː'mælɪti/ *noun* a former term for mental impairment (NOTE: This term is usually regarded as offensive.)

**menthol** /'menθəl/ *noun* a strongly scented compound, produced from peppermint oil, used in cough medicines and in the treatment of neuralgia

**mentholated** /'menθəleɪtɪd/ *adjective* impregnated with menthol

**mento-** /mentə/ *prefix* relating to the chin

**mentor** /'mentɔː/ *noun* somebody who advises and guides a younger, less experienced person ■ *verb* to act as a mentor to somebody

**mentum** /'mentəm/ *noun* the chin

**mercury** /'mɜːkjʊəri/ *noun* a poisonous liquid metal, used in thermometers (NOTE: The chemical symbol is Hg.)

**mercury poisoning** /'mɜːkjʊəri ,pɔɪz(ə)nɪŋ/ *noun* poisoning by drinking mercury or mercury compounds or by inhaling mercury vapour

**mercy killing** /'mɜːsi ,kɪlɪŋ/ *noun* same as euthanasia

**meridian** /mə'riːdiən/ *noun* in acupuncture and Chinese medicine, one of the pathways in the body along which its energy is believed to flow

**mes-** /mes/ *prefix* same as **meso-** (used before vowels)

**mesencephalon** /mesen'kefəlɒn/ *noun* same as midbrain

**mesenteric** /,mesen'terɪk/ *adjective* referring to the mesentery

**mesentery** /'mesent(ə)rɪ/ *noun* a double-layer peritoneum which attaches the small intestine and other abdominal organs to the abdominal wall

**mesial** /'miːsiəl/ *adjective* 1. in dentistry, relating to the middle of the front of the jaw, or occurring in a place near this 2. relating to or located in the middle part of something

**meso-** /mesə/ *prefix* middle

**mesometrium** /,mesə'miːtriəm/ *noun* a muscle layer of the uterus

**mesothelioma** /,mesə'tiːli'əʊmə/ *noun* a tumour of the serous membrane, which can be benign or malignant

**mesothelium** /,mesəu'tiːliəm/ *noun* a layer of cells lining a serous membrane. Compare **epithelium**, **endothelium**

**messenger RNA** /,mes(ə)ndʒə ,ɑːr en 'eɪ/ *noun* a type of ribonucleic acid which transmits the genetic code from the DNA to the ribosomes which form the proteins coded on the DNA. Abbreviation **mRNA**

**mestranol** /'miːstrənoʊl/ *noun* a synthetically produced oestrogen used in birth control pills

**meta-** /metə/ *prefix* referring to change

**metabolic** /,metə'bɒlɪk/ *adjective* referring to metabolism

**metabolic acidosis** /,metəbɒlɪk ,æsi 'dɔʊsɪs/ *noun* acidosis caused by a malfunction of the body's metabolism

**metabolic alkalosis** /,metəbɒlɪk ælkə 'lɔʊsɪs/ *noun* alkalosis caused by a malfunction of the body's metabolism

**metabolise** /mə'tæbəlaɪz/, **metabolize** *verb* to change the nature of something by metabolism ○ *The liver metabolises proteins and carbohydrates.*

**metabolism** /mə'tæbəlaɪz(ə)m/ *noun* the chemical processes which are continually taking place in the human body and which are essential to life, especially the processes that convert food into energy

**metabolite** /mə'tæbəlaɪt/ *noun* a substance produced by metabolism, or a substance taken into the body in food and then metabolised

**metacarpal bone** /,metə'kɑːp(ə)l bəʊn/, **metacarpal** /,metə'kɑːp(ə)l/ *noun* one of the five bones in the metacarpus

**metacarpophalangeal** /,metə,kɑːpəʊfə 'lændʒiəl/ *adjective* relating to the part of the hand between the wrist and the fingers

**metacarpophalangeal joint** /,metə,kɑːpəʊ fə'lændʒiəl ,dʒɔɪnt/ *noun* a joint between a metacarpal bone and a finger. Also called **MCP joint**, **MP joint**

**metacarpus** /,metə'kɑːpəs/ *noun* the five bones in the hand between the fingers and the wrist. See illustration at **HAND** in Supplement

**metaphase** /'metəfeɪz/ *noun* one of the stages in mitosis or meiosis

**metaphysis** /me'tæfəsɪs/ *noun* the end of the central section of a long bone, where the bone grows and where it joins the epiphysis

**metaplasia** /metə'pleɪziə/ *noun* a change of one tissue to another

**metastasis** /me'tæstəsɪs/ *noun* the spreading of a malignant disease from one part of the body to another through the bloodstream or the lymph system. Also called **secondary growth** (NOTE: The plural is **metastases**.)

**metastasis** /me'tæstəsəɪz/, **metastasis** *verb* to spread by metastasis

**metastatic** /metə'stætɪk/ *adjective* relating to, or produced by, metastasis ○ *Metastatic growths developed in the liver.*

**metatarsal** /,metə'tɑ:s(ə)/ *noun* one of the five bones in the metatarsus ■ *adjective* relating to the metatarsus

**metatarsal arch** /,metə'tɑ:s(ə)l ɑ:tʃ/ *noun* an arched part of the sole of the foot, running across the sole of the foot from side to side. Also called **transverse arch**

**metatarsalgia** /,metətɑ:'sældʒə/ *noun* pain in the heads of the metatarsal bones

**metatarsophalangeal joint** /metə,tɑ:səufə'lændʒiəl ,dʒɔɪnt/ *noun* a joint between a metatarsal bone and a toe

**metatarsus** /,metə'tɑ:səs/ *noun* the five long bones in the foot between the toes and the tarsus. See illustration at **FOOT** in Supplement (NOTE: The plural is **metatarsi**.)

**meteorism** /'mi:tɪərɪz(ə)m/ *noun* same as **tyimpanites**

**meter** /'mi:tə/ *noun* US same as **metre**

**-meter** /'mi:tə, mɪtə/ *suffix* measuring instrument

**metformin** /met'fɔ:mɪn/ *noun* a drug which reduces the level of the blood sugar levels, used to treat non-insulin dependent diabetes which does not respond to dietary measures

**methadone** /'meθədʊn/ *noun* a synthetically produced narcotic drug, used to reduce pain and as a substitute for heroin in the treatment of addiction

**methaemoglobin** /met,hi:məu'gləʊbɪn/ *noun* a dark brown substance formed from haemoglobin which develops during illness, following treatment with some drugs. Methaemoglobin cannot transport oxygen round the body, and so causes cyanosis.

**methaemoglobinaemia** /met,hi:məu ,gləʊbɪ'ni:miə/ *noun* the presence of methaemoglobin in the blood

**methane** /'mi:θeɪn, 'meθeɪn/ *noun* a colourless flammable gas with no smell

**methanol** /'meθənɒl/ *noun* a colourless poisonous liquid, used as a solvent and a fuel. It changes easily into a gas. Also called **methyl alcohol**

**methicillin** /,meθɪ'sɪlɪn/ *noun* a synthetically produced antibiotic, used in the treatment of infections which are resistant to penicillin

**methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus** /meθɪ,sɪlɪn rɪ,zɪstənt stæfɪlə,kɒkəs 'ɔ:riəs/ *noun* a bacterium resistant to almost all antibiotics and which can cause life-threatening infection in people recovering from surgery. Abbreviation **MRSA**

**methionine** /me'θaɪni:n/ *noun* an essential amino acid

**methotrexate** /,meθə'trekseɪt/ *noun* a drug which helps to prevent cells reproducing, used in the treatment of cancer

**methyl alcohol** /,mi:θaɪl 'ælkəhɒl/ *noun* same as **methanol**

**methylated spirits** /,meθəleɪtɪd 'spɪrɪts/ *plural noun* almost pure alcohol, with wood alcohol and colouring added

**methylphenidate** /,mi:θaɪl'fenɪdeɪt/ *noun* a drug which stimulates the central nervous system, used in the treatment of narcolepsy and attention deficit disorder

**methylprednisolone** /,mi:θaɪlpred'nɪsəʊn/ *noun* a corticosteroid drug which reduces inflammation, used in the treatment of arthritis, allergies and asthma

**metoclopramide** /,metəʊ'klɒpɾəmaɪd/ *noun* a drug used to treat nausea, vomiting and indigestion

**metoprolol** /mɪ'tɒpɾəʊl/ *noun* a drug which controls the activity of the heart, used to treat angina and high blood pressure

**metr-** /metr/ *prefix* same as **metro-** (used before vowels)

**metra** /'metrə/ *noun* the uterus

**metralgia** /me'trældʒə/ *noun* pain in the uterus

**metre** /'mi:tə/ *noun* an SI unit of length ○ *The room is four metres by three.* Symbol **m**

**metritis** /me'traɪtɪs/ *noun* same as **myometritis**

**metro-** /metrəʊ/ *prefix* referring to the uterus

**metrocopceole** /,metrə'kɒlpɾəʊsi:l/ *noun* a condition in which the uterus protrudes into the vagina

**metronidazole** /,metrə'nɪdəzəʊl/ *noun* a yellow antibiotic compound, used especially in the treatment of vaginal infections

**metroptosis** /,metrə'tɒpsɪs/ *noun* a condition in which the uterus has moved downwards out of its usual position. Also called **prolapse of the uterus**

**metrorrhagia** /,mi:tɾəʊ'reɪdʒɪə/ *noun* unusual bleeding from the vagina between the menstrual periods

**-metry** /mætri/ *suffix* relating to the process of measuring, or to instruments which are used for measuring

**mg** *abbreviation* milligram

**M** *abbreviation* 1. mitral incompetence 2. myocardial infarction

**Michel's clips** /mɪ,ʃelz 'klɪps/ *plural noun* metal clips used to suture a wound [After Gaston Michel (1874–1937), Professor of Clinical Surgery at Nancy, France.]

**miconazole** /maɪ'kɒnəzəʊl/ *noun* a drug used to treat fungal infections of the skin and nails

**micro-** /maɪkrəʊ/ *prefix* 1. very small. Opposite **macro-**, **mega-**, **megalo-** 2. one millionth (10<sup>-6</sup>)

**microangiopathy** /,maɪkrəʊ,ændʒi'ɒpəθi/ *noun* any disease of the capillaries

**microbe** /'maɪkrəʊb/ *noun* a microorganism which may cause disease and which can only be seen with a microscope, e.g. a bacterium

**microbiologist** /,maɪkrəʊbaɪ'blɒdʒɪst/ *noun* a scientist who specialises in the study of microorganisms

**microbiology** /,maɪkrəʊbaɪ'blɒdʒi/ *noun* the scientific study of microorganisms

**microcephalic** /,maɪkrəʊke'fæɪlɪk/ *adjective* having microcephaly

**microcephaly** /,maɪkrəʊ'kefəli/ *noun* a condition in which a person has an unusually small head, sometimes caused by the mother having had a rubella infection during pregnancy

**microcyte** /'maɪkrəʊsaɪt/ *noun* an unusually small red blood cell

**microcythaemia** /maɪkrəʊsaɪ'θi:miə/ *noun* same as **microcytosis**

**microcytic** /,maɪkrəʊ'sɪtɪk/ *adjective* referring to microcytes

**microcytosis** /,maɪkrəʊsaɪ'təʊsɪs/ *noun* the presence of excess microcytes in the blood

**microdactylia** /,maɪkrəʊdæk'tɪliə/, **microdactyly** /,maɪkrəʊ'dæktɪli/ *noun* a condition in which a person has unusually small or short fingers or toes

**microdissectomy** /,maɪkrəʊdɪsk'ektəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to remove all or part of a disc in the spine which is pressing on a nerve

**microglossia** /,maɪkrəʊ'glɒsiə/ *noun* a condition in which a person has an unusually small tongue

**micrognathia** /,maɪkrəʊ'neɪθiə/ *noun* a condition in which one jaw is unusually smaller than the other

**microgram** /'maɪkrəgræm/ *noun* a unit of measurement of weight equal to one millionth of a gram

**micromastia** /,maɪkrəʊ'mæstɪə/ *noun* a condition in which a person has unusually small breasts

**micromelia** /,maɪkrəʊ'mi:liə/ *noun* a condition in which a person has unusually small arms or legs

**micromole** /'maɪkrəʊ,məʊl/ *noun* a unit of measurement of the amount of substance equal to one millionth of a mole. Symbol **μ**

**micronutrient** /'maɪkrəʊ,nju:triənt/ *noun* a substance which an organism needs for normal growth and development, but only in very small quantities, e.g. a vitamin or mineral. Compare **macronutrient**

**microorganism** /,maɪkrəʊ'ɔ:gənɪz(ə)m/ *noun* an organism which can only be seen under a microscope and which may cause disease.

Viruses, bacteria and protozoa are microorganisms.

**microphthalmia** /,maɪkrɒf'θælmiə/ *noun* a condition in which the eyes are unusually small

**microscope** /'maɪkrəskəʊp/ *noun* a scientific instrument with lenses, which makes very small objects appear larger ○ *The tissue was examined under the microscope.* ○ *Under the microscope it was possible to see the cancer cells.*

**microscopic** /,maɪkrə'skɒpɪk/ *adjective* so small that it can only be seen through a microscope

**microscopy** /maɪ'krɒskəpi/ *noun* the science of the use of microscopes

**Microsporum** /'maɪkrəʊspɔ:rəm/ *noun* a type of fungus which causes ringworm of the hair, skin and sometimes nails

**microsurgery** /'maɪkrəʊ,sɜ:dʒəri/ *noun* surgery using tiny instruments and a microscope. Microsurgery is used in operations on eyes and ears, and also to connect severed nerves and blood vessels.

**microvillus** /,maɪkrəʊ'vɪləs/ *noun* a very small process found on the surface of many cells, especially the epithelial cells in the intestine (NOTE: The plural is **microvilli**.)

**microwave therapy** /'maɪkrəʊweɪv,θerəpi/ *noun* treatment using high-frequency radiation

**micturate** /'mɪktjʊreɪt/ *verb* same as **urinate**  
**micturating cystogram** /,mɪktjʊreɪtɪŋ 'sɪstəʊgræm/, **micturating cysto-urethrogram** /,mɪktjʊreɪtɪŋ 'sɪstəʊ ju'ri:θrəgræm/ *noun* an X-ray of the bladder and urethra taken while the bladder is being filled and then emptied. Abbreviation **MCU, MCUG**

**micturition** /,mɪktjʊ'rɪf(ə)n/ *noun* same as **urination**

**mid-** /mɪd/ *prefix* middle

**midazolam** /mɪ'dæzələm/ *noun* a drug used to produce sleepiness and to reduce anxiety before surgery or other procedures

**midbrain** /'mɪdbreɪn/ *noun* the small middle section of the brain stem above the pons and between the cerebrum and the hindbrain. Also called **mesencephalon**

**midcarpal** /mɪd'kɑ:p(ə)l/ *adjective* between the two rows of carpal bones

**middle colic** /,mɪd(ə)l 'kɒlɪk/ *noun* an artery which leads from the superior mesenteric artery

**middle ear** /,mɪd(ə)l 'ɪə/ *noun* a section of the ear between the eardrum and the inner ear

**middle ear infection** /,mɪd(ə)l 'ɪər ɪn 'fekʃən/ *noun* same as **otitis media**

**midgut** /'mɪdgʌt/ *noun* the middle part of the gut in an embryo, which develops into the small intestine

**mid-life crisis** /,mɪd laɪf 'kraɪsɪs/ *noun* a period in early middle age when some people

experience feelings of anxiety, insecurity and self-doubt

**midline** /'mɪdlaɪn/ *noun* an imaginary line drawn down the middle of the body from the head through the navel to the point between the feet

**midstream specimen** /'mɪdstri:m ,spesɪmɪn/, **midstream specimen of urine** /,mɪdstri:m ,spesɪmɪn əv 'juəri:n/ *noun* a sample of urine collected in a sterile bottle in the middle of a flow of urine, because the first part of the flow may be contaminated with bacteria from the skin. Abbreviation **MSU**

**midtarsal** /mɪd'tɑ:s(ə)/ *adjective* between the tarsal bones

**midwife** /'mɪdwaɪf/ *noun* a professional person who helps a woman give birth to a child, often at home

**midwifery** /mɪd'waɪfəri/ *noun* the profession of a midwife

**midwifery course** /mɪd'waɪfəri kɔ:s/ *noun* a training course to teach nurses the techniques of being a midwife

**Midwives Rules** /'mɪdwaɪvz ru:lz/ *plural noun* laws relating to midwifery

**migraine** /'mɪ:greɪn, 'maɪgreɪn/ *noun* a sharp severe recurrent headache, often associated with vomiting and visual disturbances ○ *He had an attack of migraine and could not come to work.* ○ *Her migraine attacks seem to be worse in the summer.*

**miliaria** /,mɪli'eəriə/ *noun* itchy red spots which develop on the chest, under the armpits and between the thighs in hot countries, caused by blocked sweat glands. Also called **prickly heat**, **heat rash**

**miliary** /'mɪliəri/ *adjective* small in size, like a seed

**miliary tuberculosis** /,mɪliəri tju:,bɜ:kju 'ləʊsɪs/ *noun* a form of tuberculosis which occurs as little nodes in many parts of the body, including the meninges of the brain and spinal cord

**milk** /mɪlk/ *noun* **1.** a white liquid produced by female mammals to feed their young. Cow's milk and other dairy products are important parts of most diets, especially children's. ○ *The patient can only drink warm milk.* (NOTE: No plural: *some milk, a bottle of milk or a glass of milk.*) **2.** the breast milk produced by a woman ○ *The milk will start to flow a few days after childbirth.* (NOTE: For other terms referring to milk, see words beginning with **galact-**, **galacto-**, **lact-**, **lacto-**.)

**milk dentition** /'mɪlk den,tɪf(ə)n/ *noun* same as **deciduous dentition**

**milk leg** /'mɪlk leg/ *noun* acute oedema of the leg, a condition which affects women after childbirth, where a leg becomes pale and inflamed as a result of lymphatic obstruction. Also called **white leg**, **phlegmasia alba dolens**

**milk rash** /'mɪlk ræʃ/ *noun* a temporary blotchiness of the skin seen in young babies

**milk sugar** /,mɪlk 'ʃʊgəl/ *noun* same as **lactose**

**milk tooth** /'mɪlk tu:θ/ *noun* same as **primary tooth**

**Miller-Abbott tube** /,mɪlə 'æbət tju:b/ *noun* a tube with a balloon at the end, used to clear the small intestine. The balloon is inflated after the tip of the tube reaches an obstruction.

**milli-** /mɪli/ *prefix* one thousandth (10<sup>-3</sup>). Symbol **m**

**milligram** /'mɪlɪgræm/ *noun* a unit of measurement of weight equal to one thousandth of a gram. Symbol **mg**

**millilitre** /'mɪli:lɪ:tə/ *noun* a unit of measurement of liquid equal to one thousandth of a litre. Abbreviation **ml**

**millimetre** /'mɪlmi:tə/ *noun* a unit of measurement of length equal to one thousandth of a metre. Abbreviation **mm**

**millimole** /'mɪlɪməʊl/ *noun* a unit of measurement of the amount of a substance equal to one thousandth of a mole. Abbreviation **mmol**

**millisievert** /'mɪlisi:vət/ *noun* a unit of measurement of radiation

**Milwaukee brace** /mɪl,wə:ki 'breɪs/ *noun* a support for people with unusually curved spines, consisting of a leather or metal pelvic girdle with two bars at the back and one at the front, which connect into a neck ring

**mind** /maɪnd/ *noun* the part of the brain which controls memory, consciousness or reasoning

**minimally invasive surgery** /,mɪnɪm(ə)l ɪn ,veɪsɪv 'sɜ:dʒəri/ *noun* surgery which involves the least possible disturbance to the body. It often uses lasers and other high-tech devices.

**mini mental state examination** /,mɪni 'ment(ə)l ,steɪt ɪgzæmɪ,neɪf(ə)n/ *noun* a test performed mainly by psychiatrists to determine someone's mental ability, used in the diagnosis of dementia

**minimum lethal dose** /,mɪnɪməm ,li:(ə)l 'dəʊs/ *noun* the smallest amount of a substance required to kill someone or something. Abbreviation **MLD**

**ministroke** /'mɪnɪstrəʊk/ *noun* same as **transient ischaemic attack**

**minitracheostomy** /,mɪnɪtreɪki'bɔ:stəmi/ *noun* a temporary tracheostomy

**minor injuries unit** /,maɪnər 'ɪndʒərɪz ,ju:nɪt/ *noun* a hospital department which treats most accidents and emergencies. Abbreviation **MIU**

**mio-** /maɪəʊl/ *prefix* less

**miosis** /maɪ'əʊsɪs/ *noun* **1.** the contraction of the pupil of the eye, as in bright light **2.** US same as **meiosis**

**miotic** /maɪ'ɒtɪk/ *noun* a drug which makes the pupil of the eye become smaller ■ *adjective* causing the pupil of the eye to become smaller

**mis-** /mɪs/ *prefix* wrong

**miscarriage** /'mɪskæɪrɪdʒ/ *noun* a situation in which an unborn baby leaves the uterus before the end of the pregnancy, especially during the first seven months of pregnancy ○ *She had two miscarriages before having her first child.* Also called **spontaneous abortion**

**mismatch** /'mɪsmætʃ/ *verb* to match tissues wrongly

**missed case** /,mɪst 'keɪs/ *noun* someone with an infection or disease which is not identified by a doctor

**mist.** /mɪst/, **mistura** /mɪs'tjʊərə/ ♦ **re. mist.**

**Misuse of Drugs Act 1971** /mɪs,ju:s əv 'drʌgz ,ækt/ *noun* a law relating to all aspects of the supply and possession of dangerous drugs such as morphine, anabolic steroids, LSD and cannabis. In 2002 many new benzodiazepines were added.

**mite** /maɪt/ *noun* a very small parasite, which causes dermatitis

**mitochondrial** /,maɪtə'kɒndrɪəl/ *adjective* referring to mitochondria

**mitochondrion** /,maɪtə'kɒndrɪən/ *noun* a tiny rod-shaped part of a cell's cytoplasm responsible for cell respiration (NOTE: The plural is **mitochondria**.)

**mitomycin C** /,maɪtəʊmaɪsɪn 'sɪz/ *noun* an antibiotic which helps to prevent cancer cells from growing, used especially in the chemotherapy treatment of bladder and rectal cancers

**mitosis** /maɪ'təʊsɪs/ *noun* the process of cell division, where the mother cell divides into two identical daughter cells. Compare **meiosis**

**mitral** /'maɪtrəl/ *adjective* referring to the mitral valve

**mitral incompetence** /,maɪtrəl ɪn 'kɒmpɪt(ə)n/ *noun* abbreviation **MI**. Now called **mitral regurgitation**

**mitral regurgitation** /,maɪtrəl rɪ,gɜ:dʒɪ 'teɪf(ə)n/ *noun* a situation in which the mitral valve does not close completely so that blood goes back into the atrium

**mitral stenosis** /,maɪtrəl ste'nəʊsɪs/ *noun* a condition in which the opening in the mitral valve becomes smaller because the cusps have fused (NOTE: This condition is almost always the result of rheumatic endocarditis.)

**mitral valve** /'maɪtrəl vælv/ *noun* a valve in the heart which allows blood to flow from the left atrium to the left ventricle but not in the opposite direction. Also called **bicuspid valve**

**mitral valvotomy** /,maɪtrəl væl'vɒtəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to separate the cusps of the mitral valve in mitral stenosis

**mittelschmerz** /'mɪt(ə)l,fmeɪts/ *noun* a pain felt by women in the lower abdomen at ovulation

**MIU** *abbreviation* minor injuries unit

**ml** *abbreviation* millilitre

**MLD** *abbreviation* minimum lethal dose

**MLSO** *abbreviation* medical laboratory scientific officer

**mm** *abbreviation* millimetre

**mmol** *abbreviation* millimole

**MMR** /,em em 'ɑ:/, **MMR vaccine** /,em em 'ɑ: ,væksɪ:n/ *noun* a single vaccine given to small children to protect them against measles, mumps and rubella

**MND** *abbreviation* motor neurone disease

**MO** *abbreviation* medical officer

**mobilisation** /,məʊbɪlaɪ'zeɪf(ə)n/, **mobilization** *noun* the act of making something mobile

**modality** /məʊ'dælɪti/ *noun* a method used in the treatment of a disorder, e.g. surgery or chemotherapy

**modernisation agenda** /,mɒdənaɪ'zeɪf(ə)n ə,dʒendə/ *noun* same as **Agenda for Change**

**modern matron** /,mɒd(ə)n 'meɪtrən/ *noun* a nursing post which supports the ward sister in ensuring that basic care of patients, including cleanliness of the ward and infection control, is carried out to a high standard

**MODS** *abbreviation* multiple organ dysfunction syndrome

**MOF** *abbreviation* 1. male or female 2. multi-organ failure

**Mogadon** /'mɒgəðɒn/ a trade name for nitrazepam

**MOH** *abbreviation* Medical Officer of Health

**mol** *symbol* mole 2

**molar** /'məʊlə/ *adjective* 1. referring to the large back teeth 2. referring to the mole, the SI unit of amount of a substance ■ *noun* one of the large back teeth, used for grinding food. In milk teeth there are eight molars and in permanent teeth there are twelve. See illustration at **TEETH** in Supplement

**molarity** /məʊ'lærɪti/ *noun* the strength of a solution shown as the number of moles of a substance per litre of solution

**mole** /məʊl/ *noun* 1. a dark raised spot on the skin ○ *She has a large mole on her chin.* ♀ **melanoma** 2. an SI unit of measurement of the amount of a substance. Symbol **mol**

**molecular** /mə'lekjʊlə/ *adjective* referring to a molecule

**molecular biology** /mə'lekjʊlə baɪ'ɒlədʒɪ/ *noun* the study of the molecules of living matter

**molecular weight** /mə'lekjʊlə 'weɪt/ *noun* the weight of one molecule of a substance

**molecule** /'mɒlɪkjʊ:z/ *noun* the smallest independent mass of a substance



**molluscum contagiosum** /mɒ,lʌskəm kən,tɛɪdʒi'əʊsəm/ *noun* a contagious viral skin infection which gives a small soft sore

**molluscum fibrosum** /mɒ,lʌskəm ,faɪ'brəʊsəm/ *noun* same as **neurofibromatosis**

**monaural** /mɒn'ɔ:ɾəl/ *adjective* referring to the use of one ear only

**mongolism** /'mɒŋgəlɪz(ə)m/ *noun* a former name for Down's syndrome (NOTE: This term is regarded as offensive.)

**monitor** /'mɒnɪtə/ *noun* a screen on a computer  
 ■ *verb* 1. to check something 2. to examine how someone is progressing

**monitoring** /'mɒnɪt(ə)rɪŋ/ *noun* the regular examination and recording of a person's temperature, weight, blood pressure and other essential indicators

**mono-** /mɒnəʊ/ *prefix* single or one

**monoamine oxidase** /,mɒnəʊ,æmɪ:n'ɒksɪdeɪz/ *noun* an enzyme which breaks down the catecholamines to their inactive forms. Abbreviation **MAO**

**monoamine oxidase inhibitor** /,mɒnəʊ,æmɪ:n'ɒksɪdeɪz ɪn'hɪbɪtə/ *noun* a drug which inhibits monoamine oxidase and is used to treat depression, e.g. phenelzine. Its use is limited, because of the potential for drug and dietary interactions and the necessity for slow withdrawal. It can also cause high blood pressure. Abbreviation **MAOI**. Also called **MAO inhibitor**

**monoblast** /'mɒnəʊblæst/ *noun* a cell which produces a monocyte

**monochromatism** /,mɒnəʊ'krəʊmətɪz(ə)m/ *noun* colour blindness in which all colours appear to be black, grey or white. Compare **dichromatism**, **trichromatism**

**monoclonal** /,mɒnəʊ'kləʊn(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to cells or products of cells which are formed or derived from a single clone

**monoclonal antibody** /,mɒnəʊkləʊn(ə)l'æntɪbɒdi/ *noun* an antibody which can be easily made in the laboratory by a single clone of cells. It may be useful in the treatment of cancer.

**monocular** /mɒ'nɒkjʊlə/ *adjective* referring to one eye. Compare **binocular**

**monocular vision** /mɒ'nɒkjʊlə 'vɪʒ(ə)n/ *noun* the ability to see with one eye only, so that the sense of distance is impaired

**monocyte** /'mɒnəʊsaɪt/ *noun* a white blood cell with a nucleus shaped like a kidney, which destroys bacterial cells

**monocytosis** /,mɒnəʊsaɪ'təʊsɪs/ *noun* a condition in which there is an unusually high number of monocytes in the blood. Symptoms include sore throat, swelling of the lymph nodes and fever. It is probably caused by the Epstein-Barr virus. Also called **glandular fever**

**mononucleosis** /,mɒnəʊ,nju:kli'əʊsɪs/ *noun* same as **monocytosis**

**monoplegia** /,mɒnəʊ'pli:dʒə/ *noun* the paralysis of one part of the body only, i.e. one muscle or one limb

**monosaccharide** /,mɒnəʊ'sækəraɪd/ *noun* a simple sugar which cannot be broken down any further, such as glucose or fructose

**monosodium glutamate** /,mɒnəʊsəʊdiəm'glu:təmeɪt/ *noun* a sodium salt of glutamic acid, often used to make food taste better. † **Chinese restaurant syndrome**

**monosomy** /'mɒnəʊsəʊmi/ *noun* a condition in which a person has a chromosome missing from one or more pairs

**monoxide** /mɒ'nɒksaɪd/ † **carbon**

**monozygotic twins** /,mɒnəʊzaɪ,gɒtɪk'twɪnz/ *plural noun* same as **identical twins**

**mons** /mɒnz/ *noun* a fleshy body part which sticks out, especially the one formed by the pad of flesh where the pubic bones join (NOTE: The plural is **montes**.)

**mons pubis** /,mɒnz'pju:bɪs/ *noun* a cushion of fat covering the pubis

**mons veneris** /,mɒnz'venəɪs/ *noun* same as **mons pubis**

**Montgomery's glands** /mɒnt'gʌməɪz glændz/ *plural noun* sebaceous glands around the nipple which become more marked in pregnancy [After William Fetherstone Montgomery (1797–1859), Dublin gynaecologist.]

**mood** /mu:d/ *noun* a person's mental state at a particular time ○ a *mood of excitement* □ **in a bad mood** feeling angry or irritable □ **in a good mood** feeling happy

**moon face** /'mu:n feɪs/ *noun* a condition in which someone has a round red face, occurring in Cushing's syndrome and when there are too many steroid hormones in the body

**Mooren's ulcer** /'mɔ:əʊənz ,ʌlsə/ *noun* a persistent ulcer of the cornea, found in elderly people [After Albert Mooren (1828–99), ophthalmologist in Düsseldorf, Germany.]

**morbid** /'mɔ:bd/ *adjective* showing symptoms of being diseased ○ *The X-ray showed a morbid condition of the kidneys.*

**morbid anatomy** /,mɔ:bd ə'nætəmi/ *noun* same as **pathology**

**morbidity** /mɔ:'bɪdɪti/ *noun* the condition of being diseased or sick

**morbidity rate** /mɔ:'bɪdɪti reɪt/ *noun* the number of cases of a disease per hundred thousand of population

**morbili** /mɔ:'bɪli/ *noun* same as **measles**

**morbiform** /mɔ:'bɪlɪfɔ:m/ *adjective* referring to a rash which is similar to measles

**morbus** /'mɔ:bəs/ *noun* disease

**moribund** /'mɔ:rɪbʌnd/ *adjective* dying ■ *noun* a dying person

**morning-after pill** /ˌmɔːnɪŋ ˈɑːftə pɪl/ *noun* a contraceptive pill taken after intercourse. Also called **next-day pill**

**morning sickness** /ˌmɔːnɪŋ ˌsɪknəs/ *noun* nausea and vomiting experienced by women in the early stages of pregnancy when they get up in the morning

**Moro reflex** /ˌmɔːrəʊ ˌrɪːfleks/ *noun* a reflex of a newborn baby when it hears a loud noise (NOTE: The baby is laid on a table and observed to see if it raises its arms when the table is struck.) [After Ernst Moro (1874–1951), paediatrician in Heidelberg, Germany.]

**morphea** /mɔːˈfiə/ *noun* a form of scleroderma, a disease where the skin is replaced by thick connective tissue

**morpho-** /mɔːfəʊ/ *prefix* relating to form, shape or structure

**morphoea** /mɔːˈfiə/ *noun* same as **morphea**

**morphology** /mɔːˈfɒlədʒi/ *noun* the study of the structure and shape of living organisms

**-morphous** /mɔːfəs/ *suffix* relating to form or structure of a particular type

**mortality rate** /mɔːˈtæləti reɪt/ *noun* the number of deaths per year, shown per hundred thousand of population

**mortification** /ˌmɔːtɪfɪˈkeɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* † **necrosis**

**mortis** /ˈmɔːtɪs/ † **rigor**

**mortuary** /ˈmɔːtʃuəri/ *noun* a room in a hospital where dead bodies are kept until removed by an undertaker for burial

**mosquito** /mɒˈskiːtəʊ/ *noun* an insect which sucks human blood, some species of which can pass viruses or parasites into the bloodstream

**mother** /ˈmʌðə/ *noun* a biological or adoptive female parent

**mother-fixation** /ˈmʌðə fɪkˌseɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a condition in which a person's development has been stopped at a stage where he or she remains like a child, dependent on his or her mother

**motile** /ˈməʊtaɪl/ *adjective* referring to a cell or microorganism which can move spontaneously ○ *Sperm cells are extremely motile.*

**motility** /məʊˈtɪlɪti/ *noun* 1. (of cells or microbes) the fact of being able to move about 2. (of the gut) the action of peristalsis

**motion** /ˈməʊʃ(ə)n/ *noun* 1. movement 2. same as **bowel movement**

**motion sickness** /ˌməʊʃ(ə)n ˈsɪknəs/ *noun* illness and nausea felt when travelling. It is caused by the movement of liquid inside the labyrinth of the middle ear and is particularly noticeable in vehicles which are closed, such as planes, coaches or hovercraft. (informal)

COMMENT: The movement of liquid inside the labyrinth of the middle ear causes motion sickness, which is particularly noticeable in

vehicles which are closed, such as planes, coaches, hovercraft.

**motor** /ˈməʊtə/ *adjective* referring to movement, which produces movement

**motor area** /ˈməʊtə ˌeəriə/, **motor cortex** /ˈməʊtə ˈkɔːteks/ *noun* the part of the cortex in the brain which controls voluntary muscle movement by sending impulses to the motor nerves

**motor disorder** /ˈməʊtə dɪsˌɔːdə/ *noun* impairment of the nerves or neurons that cause muscles to contract to produce movement

**motor end plate** /ˈməʊtə ˈend pleɪt/ *noun* the end of a motor nerve where it joins muscle fibre

**motor nerve** /ˈməʊtə nɜːv/ *noun* a nerve which carries impulses from the brain and spinal cord to muscles and causes movements. Also called **efferent nerve**

**motor neurone** /ˈməʊtə ˈnjʊərəʊn/ *noun* a neurone which is part of a nerve pathway transmitting impulses from the brain to a muscle or gland

**motor neurone disease** /ˈməʊtə ˈnjʊərəʊn dɪˌziːz/ *noun* a disease of the nerve cells which control the movement of the muscles. Abbreviation **MND**

COMMENT: Motor neurone disease has three forms: progressive muscular atrophy (PMA), which affects movements of the hands, lateral sclerosis, and bulbar palsy, which affects the mouth and throat.

**motor pathway** /ˈməʊtə ˈpɑːθweɪ/ *noun* a series of motor neurones leading from the motor cortex to a muscle

**mottled** /ˈmɒt(ə)ld/ *adjective* with patches of different colours

**mountain fever** /ˈmaʊntɪn ˌfiːvəl/ *noun* same as **brucellosis**

**mountain sickness** /ˈmaʊntɪn ˌsɪknəs/ *noun* same as **altitude sickness**

**mouth** /maʊθ/ *noun* an opening at the head of the alimentary canal, through which food and drink are taken in, and through which a person speaks and can breathe ○ *She was sleeping with her mouth open.* (NOTE: For other terms referring to the mouth, see **oral** and words beginning with **stomat-**, **stomato-**.)

**mouth-to-mouth** /ˌmaʊθ tə ˈmaʊθ/, **mouth-to-mouth resuscitation** /ˌmaʊθ tə ˌmaʊθ rɪ ˌsʌsɪˈteɪʃ(ə)n/, **mouth-to-mouth ventilation** /ˌmaʊθ tə ˌmaʊθ ˌventɪˈleɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* same as **cardiopulmonary resuscitation** (informal)

**mouthwash** /ˈmaʊθwɒʃ/ *noun* an antiseptic solution used to treat infection in the mouth

**movement** /ˈmuːvmənt/ *noun* the act of changing position or the fact of not being still

**MP joint** /ˌem ˈpiː dʒɔɪnt/ *noun* same as **metacarpophalangeal joint**

**MRC** *abbreviation* Medical Research Council

**MRCGP** *abbreviation* Member of the Royal College of General Practitioners

**MRCP** *abbreviation* Member of the Royal College of Physicians

**MRCS** *abbreviation* Member of the Royal College of Surgeons

**MRI** *abbreviation* magnetic resonance imaging

**mRNA** *abbreviation* messenger RNA

**MRSA** *abbreviation* methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*

**MS** *abbreviation* **1.** mitral stenosis **2.** multiple sclerosis

**MSH** *abbreviation* melanocyte-stimulating hormone

**MSU** *abbreviation* midstream specimen of urine

**mSv** *abbreviation* millisievert

**mucin** /'mju:ʒɪn/ *noun* a compound of sugars and protein which is the main substance in mucus

**muc-** /mju:kəʊ/ *prefix* referring to mucus

**mucocoele** /'mju:kəʊsi:l/ *noun* a cavity containing an accumulation of mucus

**mucociliary transport** /,mju:kəʊ,ʒɪliəri'trænspɔ:t/ *noun* the process in which the cilia, the microscopic structures within the nose, move mucus towards the oesophagus, cleansing the nose of dust and bacteria

**mucocoele** /'mju:kəʊsi:l/ *noun* **1.** a condition in which a cavity or organ becomes swollen because there is too much mucus in it **2.** the swelling produced by this condition

**mucocutaneous** /,mju:kəʊkju:'teɪniəs/ *adjective* referring to both mucous membrane and the skin

**mucoid** /'mju:kɔɪd/ *adjective* similar to mucus

**mucolytic** /,mju:kəʊ'lɪtɪk/ *noun* a substance which dissolves mucus

**mucopurulent** /,mju:kəʊ'pjʊərələnt/ *adjective* consisting of a mixture of mucus and pus

**mucopus** /,mju:kəʊ'pʌs/ *noun* a mixture of mucus and pus

**mucosa** /mju:'kəʊzə/ *noun* same as **mucous membrane** (NOTE: The plural is **mucosae**.)

**mucosal** /mju:'kəʊz(ə)/ *adjective* referring to a mucous membrane

**mucous** /'mju:kəs/ *adjective* referring to mucus, covered in mucus

**mucous colitis** /,mju:kəs kə'lɑɪtɪs/ *noun* an inflammation of the mucous membrane in the intestine, in which the person experiences pain caused by spasms in the muscles of the walls of the colon, accompanied by constipation or diarrhoea or alternating attacks of both. Also called **irritable bowel syndrome**

**mucous membrane** /,mju:kəs 'membreɪn/ *noun* a wet membrane which lines internal passages in the body, e.g. the nose, mouth, stomach

and throat, and secretes mucus. Also called **mucosa**

**mucous plug** /'mju:kəs plʌg/ *noun* a plug of mucus which blocks the cervical canal during pregnancy

**mucoviscidosis** /mju:kəʊvɪsɪ'dəʊsɪs/ *noun* same as **cystic fibrosis**

**mucus** /'mju:kəs/ *noun* a slippery liquid secreted by mucous membranes inside the body, which protects those membranes (NOTE: For other terms referring to mucus, see words beginning with **blenno-**.)

**multi-** /mʌltɪ/ *prefix* many

**multidisciplinary** /,mʌltɪ'dɪsɪplɪnəri/ *adjective* using or involving several specialised subjects or skills ○ a **multidisciplinary team**

**multifactorial** /,mʌltɪfæk'tɔ:riəl/ *adjective* **1.** involving several different factors or elements **2.** referring to inheritance which depends on more than one gene. Height and weight are examples of characteristics determined by multifactorial inheritance.

**multifocal lens** /,mʌltɪ,fəʊk(ə) 'lenz/ *noun* a lens in spectacles whose focus changes from top to bottom so that the person wearing the spectacles can see objects clearly at different distances

**multiforme** /'mʌltɪfɔ:m/ ➔ **erythema multiforme**

**multigravida** /,mʌltɪ'grævɪdə/ *noun* a pregnant woman who has been pregnant two or more times before

**multi-infarct dementia** /,mʌltɪ 'ɪnfə:kt dɪ ,mɛnʃə/ *noun* dementia caused by a number of small strokes, when the dementia is not progressive as in Alzheimer's disease but increases in steps as new strokes occur

**multilocular** /,mʌltɪ'lɒkjʊlə/ *adjective* referring to a body part or growth which has a lot of separate compartments or locules

**multi-organ failure** /,mʌltɪ 'ɔ:gən ,feɪljə/ *noun* an extremely serious condition in which several of the body's organs stop functioning at the same time. The person may survive, depending on how many organs fail and the length of time that the failure lasts. Abbreviation **MOF**

**multipara** /mʌl'tɪpərə/ *noun* a woman who has given birth to two or more live children

**multiple** /'mʌltɪp(ə)/ *adjective* occurring several times or in several places

**multiple birth** /,mʌltɪp(ə)l 'bɜ:θ/ *noun* a birth where more than one child is born at the same time

**multiple fracture** /,mʌltɪp(ə)l 'fræktʃə/ *noun* a condition in which a bone is broken in several places

**multiple organ dysfunction syndrome** /,mʌltɪp(ə)l ,ɔ:gən dɪs'fʌŋkʃ(ə)n ,sɪndrəʊm/ *noun* a state of continuous disturbances and abnormalities in organ systems, rather than true

failure, e.g. following trauma and sepsis. It is often fatal. Abbreviation **MODS**

**multiple pregnancy** /ˌmʌltɪp(ə)l 'pregnənsi/ *noun* a pregnancy where the mother is going to give birth to more than one child

**multiple sclerosis** /ˌmʌltɪp(ə)l sklə'rəʊsɪs/ *noun* a nervous disease which gets progressively worse, where patches of the fibres of the central nervous system lose their myelin, causing numbness in the limbs and progressive weakness and paralysis. Abbreviation **MS**. Also called **disseminated sclerosis**. ◊ **arteriosclerosis**, **atherosclerosis**

**multipolar neurone** /mʌltɪˌpəʊlə 'njuərəʊn/ *noun* a neurone with several processes. See illustration at **NEURONE** in Supplement. Compare **bipolar neurone**, **unipolar neurone**

**multiresistant** /ˌmʌltɪrɪ'zɪstənt/ *adjective* resistant to several types of antibiotic

**multivitamin** /ˌmʌltɪˌvɪtəmɪn/ *noun* a preparation containing several vitamins and sometimes minerals, used as a dietary supplement ■ *adjective* referring to a preparation containing several vitamins, and sometimes minerals ◊ *multivitamin pills* ◊ *multivitamin supplement*

**mumps** /mʌmpz/ *noun* an infectious disease of children, with fever and swellings in the salivary glands, caused by a paramyxovirus ◊ *He caught mumps from the children next door*. Also called **infectious parotitis** (NOTE: Takes a singular or a plural verb.)

**Münchhausen's syndrome** /'mʌntʃaʊz(ə)nz ˌsɪndrəʊm/ *noun* a mental disorder in which someone tries to get hospital treatment by claiming symptoms of an illness which he or she does not have. Many people will undergo very painful procedures which they do not need. [Described by Richard Asher in 1951, and named after Baron von Münchhausen, a 16th century traveller and inveterate liar.]

**Münchhausen's syndrome by proxy** /ˌmʌntʃaʊz(ə)nz ˌsɪndrəʊm baɪ 'prɒksi/ *noun* a mental disorder in which someone tries to get hospital treatment for someone else such as their child or an elderly relative. It is regarded as a form of child abuse, as the person may cause a child to be ill in order to receive attention.

**murmur** /'mɜ:mə/ *noun* a sound, usually the sound of the heart, heard through a stethoscope

**muscae volitantes** /ˌmʌskəɪ ˌvɒlɪ'tænteɪz/ *plural noun* pieces of cellular or blood debris present in the vitreous of the eye, common in old age but, if a sudden event, can be a symptom of retinal haemorrhage. Also called **floaters**

**muscarine** /'mʌskəri:n/ *noun* a poison found in fungi

**muscarinic** /ˌmʌskə'ɪnɪk/ *adjective* referring to a neurone or receptor stimulated by acetylcholine and muscarine

**muscle** /'mʌs(ə)l/ *noun* **1.** an organ in the body, which contracts to make part of the body move ◊ *If you do a lot of exercises you develop strong muscles.* ◊ *The muscles in his legs were still weak after he had spent two months in bed.* ◊ *She had muscle cramp after going into the cold water.* See illustration at **EYE** in Supplement **2.** same as **muscle tissue**

**muscle fatigue** /'mʌs(ə)l fə'ti:ɡ/, **muscular fatigue** /ˌmʌskjʊlə fə'ti:ɡ/ *noun* tiredness in the muscles after strenuous exercise

**muscle fibre** /'mʌs(ə)l ˌfaɪbə/ *noun* a component fibre of muscles (NOTE: There are two types of fibre which form striated and smooth muscles.)

**muscle relaxant** /'mʌs(ə)l rɪˌlæksənt/ *noun* a drug which reduces contractions in the muscles, e.g. baclofen

**muscle spasm** /'mʌs(ə)l ˌspæz(ə)m/ *noun* a sudden contraction of a muscle

**muscle tissue** /'mʌs(ə)l ˌtɪʃu:z/, **muscular tissue** /ˌmʌskjʊlə ˌtɪʃu:z/ *noun* the specialised type of tissue which forms the muscles and which can contract and expand

**muscle wasting** /'mʌs(ə)l ˌweɪstɪŋ/ *noun* a condition in which the muscles lose weight and become thin

**muscular** /'mʌskjʊlə/ *adjective* referring to muscle

**muscular dystrophy** /ˌmʌskjʊlə ˈdɪstrəfi/ *noun* a type of muscle disease where some muscles become weak and are replaced with fatty tissue. ◊ **Duchenne muscular dystrophy**

**muscular fatigue** /ˌmʌskjʊlə fə'ti:ɡ/ *noun* same as **muscle fatigue**

**muscular tissue** /ˌmʌskjʊlə ˌtɪʃu:z/ *noun* same as **muscle tissue**

**musculo-** /mʌskjʊləʊ/ *prefix* relating to or affecting muscle

**musculocutaneous** /ˌmʌskjʊləʊkju: ˈteɪniəs/ *adjective* referring to muscle and skin

**musculoskeletal** /ˌmʌskjʊləʊ'skelɪt(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to muscles and bone

**mutant** /'mju:t(ə)nt/ *adjective* in which mutation has occurred

**mutant gene** /ˌmju:t(ə)nt ˈdʒi:n/ *noun* a gene which has undergone mutation

**mutation** /'mju:teɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a change in DNA which changes the physiological effect of the DNA on the cell

**mute** /'mju:t/ *adjective* **1.** unwilling or unable to speak **2.** felt or expressed without speech ■ *noun* somebody who is unable or unwilling to speak (NOTE: This term is sometimes considered offensive.)

**mutism** /'mju:tɪz(ə)m/ *noun* the condition of being unable to speak. Also called **dumbness**

**my-** /maɪ/ *prefix* same as **myo-** (used before vowels)

**myalgia** /maɪ'ældʒə/ *noun* a muscle pain

**myalgic encephalomyelitis** /maɪ,ældʒɪk enˌkefələʊmaɪə'laitɪs/ *noun* a long-term condition affecting the nervous system, in which someone feels tired and depressed and has pain and weakness in the muscles. Abbreviation **ME**. Also called **chronic fatigue syndrome**, **postviral fatigue syndrome**

**myasthenia** /,maɪə'sθiːniə/, **myasthenia gravis** /,maɪə'sθiːniə 'grɑːvɪs/ *noun* a general weakness and dysfunction of the muscles, caused by poor conduction at the motor end plates

**myc-** /maɪk, maɪs/ *prefix* same as **myco-** (used before vowels)

**myco-** /maɪkəʊ/ *prefix* referring to fungus

**Mycobacterium** /,maɪkəʊbæk'tiːəriəm/ *noun* one of a group of bacteria including those which cause leprosy and tuberculosis

**Mycoplasma** /'maɪkəʊ,plæzmə/ *noun* a type of microorganism, similar to a bacterium, associated with diseases such as pneumonia and urethritis

**mycosis** /maɪ'kəʊsɪs/ *noun* any disease caused by a fungus, e.g. athlete's foot

**mydriasis** /maɪ'draɪəsɪs/ *noun* an enlargement of the pupil of the eye

**mydriatic** /,mɪdri'ætɪk/ *noun* a drug which makes the pupil of the eye become larger

**myelin** /'maɪəlɪn/ *noun* the substance of the cell membrane of Schwann cells that coils into a protective covering around nerve fibres called a myelin sheath

**myelinated** /'maɪəlɪnɪtɪd/ *adjective* referring to nerve fibre covered by a myelin sheath

**myelination** /,maɪəlɪ'neɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the process by which a myelin sheath forms around nerve fibres

**myelin sheath** /'maɪəlɪn ʃiːθ/ *noun* a layer of myelin that insulates some nerve cells and speeds the conduction of nerve impulses. See illustration at **NEURONE** in Supplement

**myelocoele** /'maɪələsiːl/ *noun* same as **meningomyelocoele**

**myelography** /,maɪə'lɒgrəfi/ *noun* an X-ray examination of the spinal cord and subarachnoid space after a radio-opaque substance has been injected

**myeloid** /'maɪələɪd/ *adjective* **1.** referring to bone marrow, or produced by bone marrow **2.** referring to the spinal cord

**myeloid leukaemia** /,maɪələɪd luː'kiːmiə/ *noun* an acute form of leukaemia in adults

**myeloid tissue** /'maɪələɪd ,tɪʃuː/ *noun* red bone marrow

**myeloma** /,maɪə'ləʊmə/ *noun* a malignant tumour in bone marrow, at the ends of long bones or in the jaw

**myelomeningocele** /,maɪələʊmə 'nɪŋgəʊsiːl/ *noun* same as **meningomyelocoele**

**myelopathy** /,maɪə'lɒpəθi/ *noun* any disorder of the spinal cord or bone marrow

**myelosuppression** /,maɪələʊsə'preʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a condition in which the bone marrow does not produce enough blood cells, often occurring after chemotherapy

**myo-** /maɪəʊ/ *prefix* referring to muscle

**myocardial** /,maɪəʊ'kɑːdiəl/ *adjective* referring to the myocardium

**myocardial infarction** /,maɪəʊ,kɑːdiəl ɪn'fɑːkʃən/ *noun* the death of part of the heart muscle after coronary thrombosis. Abbreviation **MI**

**myocarditis** /,maɪəʊkɑː'daɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the heart muscle

**myocardium** /,maɪəʊ'kɑːdiəm/ *noun* the middle layer of the wall of the heart, formed of heart muscle. See illustration at **HEART** in Supplement

**myocoele** /'maɪəsiːl/ *noun* a condition in which a muscle pushes through a gap in the surrounding membrane

**myoclonic** /,maɪəʊ'klɒnɪk/ *adjective* referring to myoclonus

**myoclonic epilepsy** /,maɪəʊklɒnɪk 'epɪlɛpsi/ *noun* a form of epilepsy where the limbs jerk frequently

**myoclonus** /maɪ'ɒklənəs/ *noun* a muscle spasm which makes a limb give an involuntary jerk

**myocyte** /'maɪəʊsaɪt/ *noun* a muscle cell

**myofibril** /,maɪəʊ'faɪbrɪl/ *noun* a long thread of striated muscle fibre

**myofibrosis** /,maɪəʊfaɪ'brəʊsɪs/ *noun* a condition in which muscle tissue is replaced by fibrous tissue

**myoma** /maɪ'əʊmə/ *noun* a benign tumour in a smooth muscle

**myomectomy** /,maɪəʊ'mektəmi/ *noun* the surgical removal of a benign growth from a muscle, especially removal of a fibroid from the uterus

**myometritis** /,maɪəʊmə'traɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the myometrium. Also called **metritis**

**myometrium** /,maɪəʊ'miːtriəm/ *noun* the muscular tissue in the uterus

**myoneural** /,maɪəʊ'njʊərəl/ *adjective* relating to or involving both the muscles and the nerves

**myoneural junction** /,maɪəʊnjʊərəl 'dʒʌŋkʃ(ə)n/ *noun* same as **neuromuscular junction**

**myopathy** /maɪ'ɒpəθi/ *noun* a disease of a muscle, especially one in which the muscle wastes away

**myopia** /maɪ'əʊpiə/ *noun* a condition in which someone can see clearly objects which are close, but not ones which are further away. Also called **shortsightedness**. Opposite **longsightedness**

**myopic** /maɪ'ɒpɪk/ *adjective* able to see close objects clearly, but not objects which are further away. Also called **shortsighted**, **nearsighted**

**myoplasty** /'maɪəʊplæsti/ *noun* a form of plastic surgery to repair a muscle

**myosarcoma** /,maɪəʊsɑ:'kəʊmə/ *noun* a malignant tumour containing unstriated muscle

**myosis** /maɪ'əʊsɪs/ *noun* another spelling of **miosis** 1

**myositis** /,maɪəʊ'saɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation and degeneration of a muscle

**myotic** /maɪ'ɒtɪk/ *noun* a drug which causes the pupil of the eye to contract

**myotomy** /maɪ'ɒtəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to cut a muscle

**myotonia** /,maɪəʊ'təʊniə/ *noun* difficulty in relaxing a muscle after exercise

**myotonic** /,maɪəʊ'təʊnɪk/ *adjective* referring to tone in a muscle

**myringa** /mɪ'rɪŋgə/ *noun* same as **eardrum**

**myringitis** /,mɪrɪŋ'dʒaɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the eardrum

**myringoplasty** /mɪ'rɪŋgəʊplæsti/ *noun* the surgical repair of a perforated eardrum. Also called **tympanooplasty**

**myringotome** /mɪ'rɪŋgəʊtəʊm/ *noun* a sharp knife used in myringotomy

**myringotomy** /,mɪrɪŋ'gɒtəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to make an opening in the eardrum to allow fluid to escape. Also called **tympanotomy**

**myx-** /mɪks/, **myxo-** /mɪksəʊ/ *prefix* referring to mucus

**myxoedema** /,mɪksə'di:mə/ *noun* a condition caused when the thyroid gland does not produce enough thyroid hormone. The person, often a middle-aged woman, becomes overweight, moves slowly and develops coarse skin. It can be treated with thyroxine.

**myxoedematous** /,mɪksə'demətəs/ *adjective* referring to myxoedema

**myxoid cyst** /,mɪksɔɪd 'sɪst/ *noun* a cyst which develops at the base of a fingernail or toenail

**myxovirus** /,mɪksəʊ'vaɪrəs/ *noun* any virus which has an affinity for the mucoprotein receptors in red blood cells. One of these viruses causes influenza.

# N

**n** *symbol* nano-

**nabothian cyst** /nə,bəʊθiən 'sɪst/, **nabothian follicle** /nə,bəʊθiən 'fɒlɪk(ə)l/, **nabothian gland** /nə,bəʊθiən 'glænd/ *noun* a cyst which forms in the cervix of the uterus when the ducts in the cervical glands are blocked

**Naegele rule** /'neɪgələ ru:l/ *noun* a method used to determine when a pregnant woman is likely to go into labour, in which nine months and seven days are added to the date on which her last period started. If the woman does not have a 28-day menstrual cycle, an adjustment is made: e.g., if she has a 26-day cycle you would subtract 2 days from the Naegele's estimated due date.

**naevus** /'ni:vəs/ *noun* same as **birthmark** (NOTE: The plural is **naevi**.)

**NAI** *abbreviation* non-accidental injury

**nail** /neɪl/ *noun* a hard growth, made of keratin, which forms on the top surface at the end of each finger and toe. Also called **unguis** (NOTE: For terms referring to nail, see words beginning with **onych-**, **onycho-**.)

**nail avulsion** /'neɪl ə,vʌlʃən/ *noun* the act of pulling away an ingrowing toenail

**nail bed** /'neɪl bed/ *noun* the part of the finger which is just under the nail and on which the nail rests

**nail matrix** /'neɪl ,meɪtrɪks/ *noun* the internal structure of the nail, the part of the finger from which the nail grows

**naloxone** /nə'ləksəʊn/ *noun* a drug resembling morphine, used in the diagnosis of narcotics addiction and to reverse the effects of narcotics poisoning

**named nurse** /,neɪmd 'nɜ:s/ *noun* a nurse, midwife or health visitor who is responsible for communicating with a particular person and ensuring that his or her needs for care and information are met

**nandrolone** /'nændrələʊn/ *noun* an anabolic steroid which builds muscle. Its use is banned by the International Amateur Athletics Federation.

**nano-** /nænəʊ/ *prefix* one thousand millionth (10<sup>-9</sup>). Symbol **n**

**nanometre** /'nænəʊmɪtə/ *noun* a unit of measurement of length equal to one thousand millionth of a metre. Symbol **nm**

**nanomole** /'nænəʊməʊl/ *noun* a unit of measurement of the amount of a substance equal to one thousand millionth of a mole. Symbol **nmol**

**nanosecond** /'nænəʊ,sekənd/ *noun* a unit of measurement of time equal to one thousand millionth of a second. Symbol **ns**

**nape** /neɪp/ *noun* the back of the neck. Also called **nucha**

**nappy** /'næpi/ *noun* a cloth used to wrap round a baby's bottom and groin, to keep clothing clean and dry

**nappy rash** /'næpi ræʃ/ *noun* sore red skin on a baby's buttocks and groin, caused by long contact with ammonia in a wet nappy

**naproxen** /næ'prɒksən/ *noun* a drug which reduces inflammation and pain, used in the treatment of arthritis

**narcissism** /'nɑ:sɪsɪz(ə)m/ *noun* in psychiatry, a personality disorder in which someone has a very confident opinion about their own appearance and abilities, and a great need to be admired by other people. It sometimes involves sexual interest in their own body.

**narco-** /nɑ:kəʊ/ *prefix* referring to sleep or stupor

**narcolepsy** /'nɑ:kəlepsi/ *noun* a condition in which someone has an uncontrollable tendency to fall asleep at any time

**narcoleptic** /,nɑ:kə'leptɪk/ *adjective* **1.** causing narcolepsy **2.** having narcolepsy ■ *noun* **1.** a substance which causes narcolepsy **2.** someone who has narcolepsy

**narcosis** /nɑ:'kəʊsɪs/ *noun* a state of lowered consciousness induced by a drug

**narcotic** /nɑ:'kɒtɪk/ *noun* a pain-relieving drug which makes someone sleep or become unconscious ○ *The doctor put her to sleep with a powerful narcotic.* ■ *adjective* causing sleep or unconsciousness ○ *the narcotic side-effects of an antihistamine*

**nares** /'neərɪz/ *plural noun* the nostrils (NOTE: The singular is **nares**.)

**nasal** /'neɪz(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to the nose

**nasal apertures** /,neɪz(ə)l 'æpətʃəs/ *plural noun* the two openings shaped like funnels leading from the nasal cavity to the pharynx. ♀ **choana**

**nasal cavity** /,neɪz(ə)l 'kævɪti/ *noun* the cavity behind the nose between the cribriform plates above and the hard palate below, divided in two by the nasal septum and leading to the nasopharynx

**nasal conchae** /,neɪz(ə)l 'kɒŋki:/ *plural noun* the three ridges of bone, called the superior, middle and inferior conchae, which project into the nasal cavity from the side walls. Also called **turbinates**

**nasal congestion** /,neɪz(ə)l kən'dʒestʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the blocking of the nose by inflammation as a response to a cold or other infection

**nasal drops** /'neɪz(ə)l drɒps/ *plural noun* drops of liquid inserted into the nose

**nasal septum** /,neɪz(ə)l 'septəm/ *noun* a wall of cartilage between the two nostrils and the two parts of the nasal cavity

**nasal spray** /'neɪz(ə)l spreɪ/ *noun* a spray of liquid into the nose

**nascent** /'næs(ə)nt, 'neɪs(ə)nt/ *adjective* **1.** in the process of coming into existence and starting to develop **2.** referring to a substance, especially hydrogen, in the process of being created. At this stage it is often in a highly active form.

**Naseptin** /næ'septɪn/ a trade name for a mixture containing chlorhexidine and neomycin, used to treat nasal infection by organisms such as staphylococci

**naso-** /neɪzəʊ/ *prefix* referring to the nose

**nasogastric** /,neɪzəʊ'gæstrɪk/ *adjective* referring to the nose and stomach

**nasogastric tube** /,neɪzəʊ'gæstrɪk 'tjuːb/ *noun* a tube passed through the nose into the stomach

**nasolacrimal** /,neɪzəʊ'lækɪrɪm(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to the nose and the tear glands

**nasolacrimal duct** /,neɪzəʊ'lækɪrɪm(ə)l 'dʌkt/ *noun* a duct which drains tears from the lacrimal sac into the nose

**nasopharyngeal** /,neɪzəʊ'fæɪrɪn'dʒiːəl/ *adjective* referring to the nasopharynx

**nasopharyngitis** /,neɪzəʊ'fæɪrɪn'dʒaɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the mucous membrane of the nasal part of the pharynx

**nasopharynx** /,neɪzəʊ'fæɪrɪŋks/ *noun* the top part of the pharynx which connects with the nose

**nasosinusitis** /,neɪzəʊ'saɪnəs'saɪtɪs/ *noun* a condition in which the nose and sinuses swell up

**nates** /'neɪtiːz/ *noun* same as **buttock**

**National Boards** /,næʃ(ə)nəl 'bɔːrdz/ *plural noun* the National Boards for Nursing, Midwifery, and Health Visiting, which were formerly responsible for the education of professionals in

these fields in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland

**National Council for Vocational Qualifications** /,næʃ(ə)nəl ,kɑʊns(ə)l fə vɔː ,keɪʃ(ə)nəl ,kwɒlɪfɪ'keɪʃ(ə)nz/ *noun* full form of **NCVQ**

**National Health Service** /,næʃ(ə)nəl 'helθ ,sɜːvɪs/ *noun* a government service in the UK which provides medical services free of charge at the point of delivery, or at reduced cost, to the whole population. The service is paid for out of tax revenue. Abbreviation **NHS**

**National Institute for Clinical Excellence** /,næʃ(ə)n(ə)l ,ɪnstɪtjuːt fə ,kɪnɪk(ə)l 'eksələns/ *noun* an organisation in the UK which produces recommendations for treatments based on clinical evidence and cost-effectiveness. Abbreviation **NICE**

**National Service Framework** /,næʃ(ə)nəl 'sɜːvɪs ,freɪmwɜːk/ *noun* full form of **NSF**

**natriuretic** /,neɪtrɪju'retɪk/ *noun* something which helps sodium to be excreted in the urine

**natural childbirth** /,nætʃ(ə)rəl 'tʃaɪldbɜːθ/ *noun* childbirth where the mother is not given any pain-killing drugs or anaesthetic but is encouraged to give birth after having prepared herself through relaxation and breathing exercises and a new psychological outlook

**natural immunity** /,nætʃ(ə)rəl ɪ'mjuːnɪti/ *noun* the immunity from disease which a newborn baby has from birth and which is inherited or acquired in the uterus or from the mother's milk

**natural killer cell** /,nætʃ(ə)rəl 'kiːl ,sel/ *noun* a white blood cell which can recognise microorganisms and tumour cells as foreign without any previous exposure to them, and destroy them

**natural mother** /,nætʃ(ə)rəl 'mʌðə/, **natural parent** /,nætʃ(ə)rəl 'peərənt/ *noun* same as **birth mother, birth parent**

**nature nurture debate** /,neɪtʃə 'nɜːtʃə dɪ ,beɪt/ *noun* the arguments put forward about whether human beings behave in the way they do because of their genetic make-up and instincts or because of the way they are educated and the influences they are exposed to when they are young

**naturopathy** /,neɪtʃə'trɒpəθi/ *noun* a method of treatment of diseases and disorders which does not use medical or surgical means, but natural forces such as light, heat, massage, eating natural foods and using herbal remedies

**nausea** /'nɔːziə/ *noun* a feeling that you want to vomit ○ *She suffered from nausea in the morning.* ○ *He felt slight nausea after getting onto the boat.*

**nauseated** /'nɔːziətɪd/ *adjective* feeling as if you are about to vomit ○ *The casualty may feel nauseated.*

**navel** /'neɪv(ə)l/ *noun* the scar with a depression in the middle of the abdomen where the umbilical



cord was detached after birth. Also called **umbilicus** (NOTE: For other terms referring to the navel, see words beginning with **omphal-**, **omphalo-**.)

**navicular** /nə'vɪkjʊlə/ *adjective* relating to a navicular bone ■ *noun* same as **navicular bone**

**navicular bone** /nə'vɪkjʊlə bæʊn/ *noun* one of the tarsal bones in the foot. See illustration at **FOOT** in Supplement

**NCVQ** /,en si: vi: 'kju:z/ *noun* a government body in the UK responsible for setting standards of qualification for specific jobs. Full form **National Council for Vocational Qualifications**

**NDU** *abbreviation* Nursing Development Unit

**nearsighted** /nɪə'saɪtɪd/ *adjective* same as **myopic**

**nebula** /'nebjʊlə/ *noun* a slightly cloudy spot on the cornea

**nebuliser** /'nebjʊlaɪzə/, **nebulizer** *noun* same as **atomiser**

**neck** /nek/ *noun* **1.** the part of the body which joins the head to the body ○ *He is suffering from pains in the neck.* ○ *The front of the neck is swollen with goitre.* ○ *The jugular veins run down the side of the neck.* **2.** a narrow part of a bone or organ

**neck collar** /'nek ,kɒlə/ *noun* a strong high collar to support the head of a person with neck injuries or a condition such as cervical spondylosis

**necro-** /nekrəʊ/ *prefix* referring to death

**necrology** /ne'krɒlədʒi/ *noun* the scientific study of mortality statistics

**necrophilia** /,nekrəʊ'fɪliə/, **necrophilism** /ne'krɒfɪlɪz(ə)m/ *noun* unusual pleasure in corpses

**necropsy** /'nekrɒpsɪ/ *noun* same as **post mortem**

**necrosis** /ne'krɒsɪs/ *noun* the death of a part of the body such as a bone, tissue or an organ as a result of disease or injury ○ *Gangrene is a form of necrosis.*

**necrotic** /ne'krɒtɪk/ *adjective* referring to, or affected with, necrosis ○ *necrotic tissue*

**necrotising enterocolitis** /,nekrətəɪzɪŋ ,entərəʊkə'lærtɪs/ *noun* a disorder in which patches of dead tissue are found in the small or large intestine as a result of severe bacterial infection. It occurs in babies, especially premature ones.

**necrotomy** /ne'krɒtəmi/ *noun* the dissection of a dead body (NOTE: The plural is **necrotomies**.)

**needle** /'ni:d(ə)l/ *noun* **1.** a thin metal instrument with a sharp point at one end and a hole at the other for attaching a thread, used for sewing up surgical incisions **2.** the hollow pointed end of a hypodermic syringe, or the syringe itself

**needlestick** /'ni:d(ə)lstɪk/ *noun* an accidental pricking of your own skin by a needle, as by a nurse picking up a used syringe

**needlestick injury** /'ni:d(ə)lstɪk ,ɪndʒəri/ *noun* the real or potential harm resulting from a prick with a needle previously used to take blood or give an injection. The main concern is the risk of HIV or hepatitis B infection.

**needling** /'ni:d(ə)lɪŋ/ *noun* the puncture of a cataract with a needle

**needs assessment** /'ni:dz ə,sesmənt/ *noun* the investigation of what a particular group of people need in terms of health and social care, so that services can be matched to their needs

**needs deprivation** /'ni:dz deprɪ'veɪf(ə)n/ *noun* a state in which someone does not have the opportunity or capacity to fulfil his or her basic needs

**negative** /'negətɪv/ *adjective* **1.** meaning or showing 'no' **2.** indicating that something being tested for is not present ○ *The test results were negative.* Opposite **positive**

**negative feedback** /,negətɪv 'fɪ:dbæk/ *noun* a situation in which the result of a process represses the process which caused it

**negligence** /'neglɪdʒəns/ *noun* the act of causing injury or harm to another person or to property as the result of doing something wrongly or failing to provide a proper level of care

**Neisseria** /'naɪ'sɪəriə/ *noun* a genus of bacteria which includes gonococcus, which causes gonorrhoea, and meningococcus, which causes meningitis

**nematode** /'nemətəʊd/ *noun* a type of parasitic roundworm, e.g. a hookworm, pinworm or roundworm

**neo-** /ni:əʊ/ *prefix* new

**neoadjuvant chemotherapy** /,ni:əʊ ,ædʒʊvənt ,ki:məʊ'terəpi/ *noun* chemotherapy given to people with tumours instead of immediate surgery or radiotherapy, in the hope of reducing the need for these later

**neomycin** /,ni:əʊ'maɪsɪn/ *noun* a drug used externally to treat bacterial infections

**neonatal** /,ni:əʊ'neɪt(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to the first few weeks after birth

**neonatal death rate** /,ni:əʊneɪt(ə)l ,deθ ,reɪt/ *noun* the number of babies who die soon after birth, shown per thousand babies born

**neonatal screening** /,ni:əʊ,neɪt(ə)l 'skri:nɪŋ/ *noun* a set of tests performed on babies soon after birth so that any problems can be treated immediately (NOTE: Tests for certain diseases such as hypothyroidism and phenylketonuria are a legal duty.)

**neonate** /'ni:əʊneɪt/ *noun* a baby which is less than four weeks old

**neonatologist** /,ni:əʊ'nɒlədʒɪst/ *noun* a specialist who looks after babies during the first few

weeks of life, or premature babies and babies with some congenital disorders

**neonatology** /,ni:əʊnə'tɒlədʒi/ *noun* the branch of medicine dealing with babies in the first few weeks of life

**neoplasm** /'ni:əʊplæz(ə)m/ *noun* any new and morbid formation of tissue

**neoplasty** /'ni:əʊplæsti/ *noun* the surgical repair or replacement of damaged tissue

**neostigmine** /,ni:əʊ'stiŋmi:n/ *noun* a white crystalline compound used in the treatment of muscle fatigue myasthenia and to reverse the effects of muscle relaxant drugs

**neph-** /nefr/ *prefix* kidney

**nephralgia** /ne'frældʒə/ *noun* pain in the kidney

**nephralgic** /ne'frældʒɪk/ *adjective* relating to pain in the kidney

**nephrectomy** /ne'frektəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to remove the whole kidney (NOTE: The plural is **nephrectomies**.)

**nephritis** /ne'fræitis/ *noun* inflammation of the kidney

**nephroblastoma** /,nefrəʊblæ'stəʊmə/ *noun* a malignant tumour in the kidneys in young children, usually under the age of 10, leading to swelling of the abdomen. It is treated by removal of the affected kidney. Also called **Wilms' tumour** (NOTE: The plural is **nephroblastomas** or **nephroblastomata**.)

**nephrocalcinosis** /,nefrəʊ,kælsi'nəʊsis/ *noun* a condition in which calcium deposits are found in the kidney

**nephrocapsulectomy** /,nefrəʊ,kæpsjə'lektəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to remove the capsule round a kidney (NOTE: The plural is **nephrocapsulectomies**.)

**nephrogram** /'nefrəgræm/ *noun* a radiographic examination of the kidney

**nephrolith** /'nefrəliθ/ *noun* a stone in the kidney

**nephrolithiasis** /,nefrəʊli'tha:sis/ *noun* a condition in which stones form in the kidney

**nephrolithotomy** /,nefrəʊli'təʊtəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to remove a stone in the kidney (NOTE: The plural is **nephrolithotomies**.)

**nephrologist** /ne'frɒlədʒɪst/ *noun* a doctor who specialises in the study of the kidney and its diseases

**nephrology** /ne'frɒlədʒi/ *noun* the study of the kidney and its diseases

**nephroma** /ne'frəʊmə/ *noun* a tumour in the kidney, or a tumour derived from renal substances (NOTE: The plural is **nephromas** or **nephromata**.)

**nephron** /'nefrɒn/ *noun* a tiny structure in the kidney through which fluid is filtered

**nephropathy** /ne'frɒpəθi/ *noun* a disease or medical disorder of the kidney (NOTE: The plural is **nephropathies**.)

**nephropexy** /'nefrəʊpeksi/ *noun* a surgical operation to attach a mobile kidney (NOTE: The plural is **nephropexies**.)

**nephroptosis** /,nefrɒp'təʊsis/ *noun* a condition in which a kidney is mobile. Also called **floating kidney**

**nephrosclerosis** /,nefrəʊsklə'rəʊsis/ *noun* a kidney disease due to vascular change

**nephroscope** /'nefrəskəʊp/ *noun* a type of endoscope used to examine the kidneys

**nephrosis** /ne'frəʊsis/ *noun* degeneration of the tissue of a kidney

**nephrostomy** /ne'frɒstəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to make a permanent opening into the pelvis of the kidney from the surface (NOTE: The plural is **nephrostomies**.)

**nephrotic** /ne'frɒtɪk/ *adjective* relating to or caused by nephrosis

**nephrotic syndrome** /ne'frɒtɪk 'sɪndrəʊm/ *noun* increasing oedema, albuminuria and raised blood pressure resulting from nephrosis

**nephrotomy** /ne'frɒtəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to cut into a kidney (NOTE: The plural is **nephrotomies**.)

**nephrotoxic** /,nefrəʊ'tɒksɪk/ *adjective* poisonous or damaging to kidney cells

**nephroureterectomy** /,nefrəʊ,jʊərɪtə'rektəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to remove all or part of a kidney and the ureter attached to it. Also called **ureteronephrectomy** (NOTE: The plural is **nephroureterectomies**.)

**nerve** /nɜ:v/ *noun* **1.** a bundle of fibres that can transmit electrochemical impulses and that forms part of the network that connects the brain and spinal cord to the body's organs **2.** the sensitive tissue in the root of a tooth (NOTE: For other terms referring to nerves, see words beginning with **neur-**, **neuro-**.)

**nerve block** /'nɜ:v blɒk/ *noun* the act of stopping the function of a nerve by injecting an anaesthetic

**nerve centre** /'nɜ:v ,sentə/ *noun* the point at which nerves come together

**nerve ending** /'nɜ:v ,endɪŋ/ *noun* same as **sensory receptor**

**nerve entrapment syndrome** /,nɜ:v ɪn'træpmənt ,sɪndrəʊm/ *noun* pain caused by pressure on a nerve, especially where nerves occur in narrow passages such as the wrist

**nerve fibre** /'nɜ:v ,faɪbə/ *noun* a thin structure leading from a nerve cell and carrying nerve impulses, e.g. an axon

**nerve gas** /'nɜ:v gæs/ *noun* a gas which attacks the nervous system

**nerve impulse** /'nɜ:v ɪmpʌls/ *noun* an electrochemical impulse which is transmitted by nerve cells

**nerve regeneration** /'nɜ:v rɪˌɡenəreɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the growth of new nerve tissue after damage has occurred

**nerve root** /'nɜ:v ru:t/ *noun* the first part of a nerve as it leaves or joins the spinal column (NOTE: The dorsal nerve root is the entry for a sensory nerve, and the ventral nerve root is the exit for a motor nerve.)

**nerve tissue** /'nɜ:v ɪfɪʊ/ *noun* tissue which forms nerves, and which is able to transmit the nerve impulses

**nervous** /nə'vəʊsəl/ ♦ **anorexia nervosa**

**nervous** /'nɜ:vəs/ *adjective* **1.** referring to nerves **2.** very easily worried ○ *Don't be nervous – the operation is a very simple one.*

**nervous breakdown** /,nɜ:vəs 'breɪkdaʊn/ *noun* any sudden mental illness (*informal*)

**nervous complaint** /,nɜ:vəs kəm'pleɪnt/,

**nervous disorder** /,nɜ:vəs dɪs'ɔ:də/ *noun* an emotional or mental illness (*informal*)

**nervousness** /'nɜ:vəsənəs/ *noun* the state of being nervous

**nervous system** /'nɜ:vəs ɪstəm/ *noun* the nervous tissues of the body, including the peripheral nerves, spinal cord, ganglia and nerve centres

**nether parts** /'neðə pɑ:ts/, **nether regions** /'neðə ɾi:dʒ(ə)nz/ *plural noun* the lower part of the body, especially the buttocks or genital area (*informal*)

**nettle rash** /'net(ə)l ræʃ/ *noun* same as **urticaria**

**network** /'netwɜ:k/ *noun* any of various computer-based systems designed to allow fast communication of information between NHS agencies, e.g. communication of X-ray results from a hospital to a GP surgery ○ *a network of fine blood vessels*

**Neuman's model** /'nəʊmənɪz ˌmɒd(ə)l/ *noun* a modern model for nursing in which prevention is the primary nursing aim (NOTE: Prevention focuses on keeping both the things which cause stress and the patient's response to stress from having a damaging effect on the body.)

**neur-** /nɜ:ʊə/ *prefix* same as **neuro-** (used before vowels)

**neural** /'nɜ:ʊərəl/ *adjective* referring to a nerve or the nervous system

**neural arch** /,nɜ:ʊərəl 'ɑ:tʃ/ *noun* a curved part of a vertebra, which forms the space through which the spinal cord passes

**neuralgia** /nɜ:ʊə'reɪdʒə/ *noun* a spasm of pain which runs along a nerve

**neural tube** /'nɜ:ʊərəl tju:b/ *noun* a tube lined with ectodermal cells running the length of an

embryo, which develops into the brain and spinal cord

**neural tube defect** /,nɜ:ʊərəl 'tju:b dɪ'fekt/ *noun* a congenital anomaly which occurs when the edges of the neural tube do not close up properly while the fetus develops in the uterus, e.g. spina bifida (NOTE: There is less risk of a neural tube defect if the mother takes folic acid during her pregnancy.)

**neurapraxia** /,nɜ:ʊərə'præksɪə/ *noun* a lesion of a nerve which leads to paralysis for a very short time, giving a tingling feeling and loss of function

**neurectomy** /nɜ:ʊ'rektəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to remove all or part of a nerve (NOTE: The plural is **neurectomies**.)

**neurilemma** /,nɜ:ʊərə'lemə/ *noun* the outer sheath, formed of Schwann cells, which covers the myelin sheath around a nerve fibre. Also called **neurolemma**. See illustration at **NEURONE** in Supplement

**neuritis** /nɜ:ʊ'reɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of a nerve, giving a constant pain

**neuro-** /nɜ:ʊərə/ *prefix* nerve or nervous system

**neuroendocrine system** /,nɜ:ʊərəʊ 'endəkrɪn ɪstəm/ *noun* a system in which the central nervous system and hormonal systems interact to control the function of organs and tissues

**neuroepithelial** /,nɜ:ʊərəʊepɪ'thi:liəl/ *adjective* referring to the neuroepithelium

**neuroepithelium** /,nɜ:ʊərəʊepɪ'thi:liəm/ *noun* the layer of epithelial cells forming part of the lining of the mucous membrane of the nose or the labyrinth of the middle ear

**neurofibril** /,nɜ:ʊərəʊ'faɪbrɪl/ *noun* a fine thread in the cytoplasm of a neurone

**neurofibrilla** /,nɜ:ʊərəʊ'fɪbrɪlə/ *noun* same as **neurofibril**. See illustration at **NEURONE** in Supplement (NOTE: The plural is **neurofibrillae**.)

**neurofibroma** /,nɜ:ʊərəʊfaɪ'brəʊmə/ *noun* a benign tumour of a nerve, formed from the neurilemma (NOTE: The plural is **neurofibromas** or **neurofibromata**.)

**neurofibromatosis** /,nɜ:ʊərəʊ'faɪbrəʊmə 'təʊsɪs/ *noun* a hereditary condition in which a person has neurofibromata on the nerve trunks, limb plexuses or spinal roots, and pale brown spots appear on the skin. Abbreviation **NF**. Also called **molluscum fibrosum, von Recklinghausen's disease**

**neurogenic** /,nɜ:ʊərəʊ'dʒenɪk/ *adjective* coming from the nervous system

**neurogenic bladder** /,nɜ:ʊərəʊdʒenɪk 'blædə/ *noun* a disturbance of the bladder function caused by lesions in the nerve supply to the bladder

**neurogenic shock** /,nɜ:ʊərəʊdʒenɪk 'ʃɒk/ *noun* a state of shock caused by bad news or an unpleasant surprise

**neuroglandular junction** /,njʊərəʊ ,glændʒjələ 'dʒʌŋkʃən/ *noun* the point where a nerve joins the gland which it controls

**neurohormone** /,njʊərəʊ'hɔ:məʊn/ *noun* a hormone produced in some nerve cells and secreted from the nerve endings

**neurohypophysis** /,njʊərəʊhaɪ'pɒfəsɪs/ *noun* the lobe at the back of the pituitary gland, which secretes oxytocin and vasopressin (NOTE: The plural is **neurohypophyses**.)

**neurolemma** /,njʊərəʊ'lemə/ *noun* same as **neurilemma**

**neuroleptic** /,njʊərəʊ'leptɪk/ *noun* an anti-psychotic drug which calms a person and stops him or her from worrying, e.g. chlorpromazine hydrochloride

**neurological** /,njʊərə'lədʒɪk(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to neurology

**neurological assessment** /,njʊərə'lədʒɪk(ə)l ə'sesmənt/ *noun* an evaluation of the health of a person with a disorder of the nervous system, using interviews, a physical examination, and specific diagnostic tests, sometimes with the help of a family member or close friend

**neurologist** /njʊ'rɒlədʒɪst/ *noun* a doctor who specialises in the study of the nervous system and the treatment of its diseases

**neurology** /njʊ'rɒlədʒi/ *noun* the scientific study of the nervous system and its diseases

**neuroma** /njʊ'rəʊmə/ *noun* a benign tumour formed of nerve cells and nerve fibres (NOTE: The plural is **neuromas** or **neuromata**.)

**neuromuscular** /,njʊərəʊ'mʌskjʊlə/ *adjective* referring to both nerves and muscles

**neuromuscular junction** /,njʊərəʊ'mʌskjʊlə 'dʒʌŋkʃən/ *noun* the point where a motor nerve joins muscle fibre. Also called **myoneural junction**

**neuron** /'njʊərəʊn/, **neurone** /'njʊərɒn/ *noun* a cell in the nervous system which transmits nerve impulses. Also called **nerve cell**

**neuropathic bladder** /,njʊərəʊpəθɪk 'blædə/ *noun* a condition in which the bladder does not function properly because its nerve supply is damaged, e.g. due to an injury to the spinal cord

**neuropathology** /,njʊərəʊpə'θɒlədʒi/ *noun* the study of diseases of the nervous system

**neuropathy** /njʊərə'pəθi/ *noun* a disease involving destruction of the tissues of the nervous system (NOTE: The plural is **neuropathies**.)

**neurophysiology** /,njʊərəʊfɪzi'ɒlədʒi/ *noun* the study of the physiology of nerves

**neuroplasty** /'njʊərəʊplæsti/ *noun* surgery to repair damaged nerves

**neuropsychiatry** /,njʊərəʊsaɪ'kaɪətri/ *noun* the study of mental and nervous disorders

**neurorrhaphy** /njʊ'rɔ:rəfi/ *noun* a surgical operation to join by suture a nerve which has been cut (NOTE: The plural is **neurorrhaphies**.)

**neurosecretion** /,njʊərəʊsɪ'kri:f(ə)n/ *noun* a substance secreted by a nerve cell

**neurosis** /njʊ'rəʊsɪs/ *noun* a disorder of the personality in which a person experiences obsessive negative emotions towards someone or something, e.g. fear of empty spaces or jealousy of a sibling. ♂ **psychoneurosis** (NOTE: The plural is **neuroses**.)

**neurosurgeon** /'njʊərəʊ,sɜ:dʒən/ *noun* a surgeon who operates on the nervous system, including the brain and spinal cord

**neurosurgery** /'njʊərəʊ,sɜ:dʒəri/ *noun* surgery on the nervous system, including the brain and spinal cord

**neurotic** /njʊ'rɒtɪk/ *adjective* relating to or having neurosis

**neurotomy** /njʊ'rɒtəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to cut a nerve (NOTE: The plural is **neurotomies**.)

**neurotoxic** /,njʊərəʊ'tɒksɪk/ *adjective* harmful or poisonous to nerve cells

**neurotransmitter** /,njʊərəʊtræns'mɪtə/ *noun* a chemical substance which transmits nerve impulses from one neurone to another

**neurotripsy** /'njʊərəʊtrɪpsi/ *noun* surgical bruising or crushing of a nerve

**neurotrophic** /,njʊərəʊ'trɒfɪk/ *adjective* relating to the nutrition and maintenance of tissue of the nervous system

**neurotropic** /,njʊərəʊ'trɒpɪk/ *adjective* referring to a bacterium which is attracted to and attacks nerves

**neuter** /'nju:tə/ *adjective* neither male nor female

**neutral** /'nju:trəl/ *adjective* (of a substance) neither acid nor alkali ○ A pH factor of 7 is *neutral*.

**neutralise** /'nju:trəlaɪz/, **neutralize** *verb* 1. to counteract the effect of something ○ *Alkali poisoning can be neutralised by applying acid solution.* (NOTE: **neutralising** – **neutralised**) 2. to form a salt from an acid

**neutropenia** /,nju:trə'pi:niə/ *noun* a condition in which there are fewer neutrophils than usual in the blood

**neutrophil** /'nju:trəfi/ *noun* a type of white blood cell with an irregular nucleus, which can attack and destroy bacteria. Also called **polymorph**

**newton** /'nju:t(ə)n/ *noun* an SI unit of measurement of force. Symbol **N**

**new variant CJD** /,nju:,veəriənt ,si: dʒei 'di:/ *noun* † **variant CJD**

**next-day pill** /,nekst deɪ 'pɪl/ *noun* same as **morning-after pill**

**next of kin** /ˌnekst əv 'kɪn/ *noun* the person or persons who are most closely related to someone  
 ○ *The hospital has notified the next of kin of the death of the accident victim.* (NOTE: Takes a singular or plural verb.)

**nexus** /ˈneksəs/ *noun* a point where two organs or tissues join

**NHS** *abbreviation* National Health Service

**NHS Direct** /ˌen eɪtʃ es diˈrekt/ *noun* in the UK, a national telephone helpline run by nurses to provide information about health and health services for the public

**NHS targets** /ˌen eɪtʃ es ˈtɑːɡɪts/ *plural noun* performance targets set by the government for individual NHS primary care trusts

**niacin** /ˈnaɪəsn/ *noun* a vitamin of the vitamin B complex found in milk, meat, liver, kidney, yeast, beans, peas and bread, lack of which can cause mental disorders and pellagra. Also called **nicotinic acid**

**nicardipine** /nɪˈkɑːdɪpiːn/ *noun* a drug which slows down the movement of calcium ions into smooth muscle cells, used especially to treat angina

**NICE** /naɪs/ *abbreviation* National Institute for Clinical Excellence

**niclosamide** /nɪˈklɒsəmaɪd/ *noun* a drug used for removing tapeworms

**nicotine** /ˈnɪkətiːn/ *noun* the main alkaloid substance found in tobacco

**nicotine addiction** /ˈnɪkətiːn əˌdɪkʃən/ *noun* an addiction to nicotine, derived from smoking tobacco

**nicotine patch** /ˈnɪkətiːn pætʃ/ *noun* a patch containing nicotine which is released slowly into the bloodstream, applied to the skin as a method of curing nicotine addiction

**nicotine replacement** /ˈnɪkətiːn rɪˌpleɪsmənt/ *noun* the use of nicotine patches or other products to help during an attempt to give up smoking

**nicotinic acid** /ˌnɪkəˈtɪnɪk ˈæsɪd/ same as **niacin**

**nictation** /nɪkˈteɪʃ(ə)n/, **nictitation** /nɪktɪˈteɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the act of winking

**nidation** /naɪˈdeɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* **1.** the process of building the endometrial layers of the uterus between menstrual periods **2.** the point in the development of an embryo at which the fertilised ovum reaches the uterus and implants in the wall of the uterus. Also called **implantation**

**nidus** /ˈnaɪdəs/ *noun* a site where bacteria can settle and breed, which becomes a centre of infection (NOTE: The plural is **niduses** or **nidi**.)

**Niemann-Pick disease** /ˌniːmən ˈpɪk dɪˌzɪːz/ *noun* a rare inherited disease of a group which affect metabolism. Signs in babies include

feeding difficulties, a large abdomen within 3 to 6 months, and progressive loss of early motor skills.

**nifedipine** /nɪˈfedɪpiːn/ *noun* a drug which stops the heart muscles from taking up calcium, used in the treatment of high blood pressure and angina pectoris

**night nurse** /ˈnaɪt nɜːs/ *noun* a nurse who is on duty at night

**night sweat** /ˈnaɪt swet/ *noun* heavy sweating when a person is asleep at night

**night terror** /ˈnaɪt ˌterə/ *noun* a period of disturbed sleep, which a child does not remember afterwards

**nigra** /ˈnaɪgrə/ ♦ **linea nigra**

**nihilism** /ˈnaɪhɪlɪz(ə)m/ *noun* the rejection of all the usual social conventions and beliefs, especially of morality and religion

**nihilistic** /ˌnaɪhɪˈlɪstɪk/ *adj* relating to or showing a belief in nihilism

**nipple** /ˈnɪp(ə)l/ *noun* **1.** same as **mammilla** **2.** *US* a rubber teat on a baby's feeding bottle

**Nissl granule** /ˈnɪs(ə)l ˌgrænjuːl/, **Nissl body** /ˈnɪs(ə)l ˌbɒdi/ *noun* one of the coarse granules surrounding the nucleus in the cytoplasm of nerve cells. See illustration at **NEURONE** in Supplement [Described 1894. After Franz Nissl (1860–1919), German psychiatrist.]

**nit** /nɪt/ *noun* an egg or larva of a louse

**nitrate** /ˈnaɪtreɪt/ *noun* a drug such as glyceryl trinitrate which dilates the vessels leading to the heart muscle and lowers cardiac work by reducing venous return to the heart, for rapid relief of angina and in heart failure (NOTE: Patients can develop tolerance to these drugs.)

**-nitrate** /ˈnaɪtreɪt/ *suffix* used in names of nitrate drugs

**nitrazepam** /naɪˈtræzɪpæm/ *noun* a tranquiliser used in some sleeping pills

**nitrofurantoin** /ˌnaɪtrəʊfjuːˈræntəɪn/ *noun* a drug which helps to prevent the growth of bacteria, used in the treatment of urinary infections

**nitrogen** /ˈnaɪtrədʒən/ *noun* a chemical element, which is a gas that is the main component of air and is an essential part of protein (NOTE: The chemical symbol is **N**.)

**nitroglycerin** /ˌnaɪtrəʊˈɡlɪsərɪn/ *noun* a drug which helps the veins and coronary arteries to become wider

**nitrous oxide** /ˌnaɪtrəs ˈɒksaɪd/ *noun* a colourless gas with a sweet smell, used in combination with other gases as an anaesthetic in dentistry and surgery. Also called **laughing gas**

**nm** *abbreviation* nanometre

**NMC** *abbreviation* Nursing and Midwifery Council

**nmol** *abbreviation* nanomole

**NMR** *abbreviation* nuclear magnetic resonance

**noci-** /ˈnəʊsi/ *prefix* pain or injury

**nociassociation** /,nəʊsiə,səʊsi'eɪf(ə)n/ *noun* an unconscious release of nervous energy, e.g. as a result of shock

**nociceptive** /,nəʊsi'septɪv/ *adjective* referring to nerves which carry pain to the brain

**nociceptor** /'nəʊsi,septə/ *noun* a sensory nerve which carries pain to the brain

**noct-** /nɒkt/ *prefix* same as **nocti-**

**nocte** /'nɒkti/ *adverb* at night. Opposite **mane** (NOTE: used on prescriptions)

**nocti-** /nɒkti/ *prefix* referring to night

**nocturia** /nɒk'tjuəriə/ *noun* the fact of passing an unusually large quantity of urine during the night

**nocturnal** /nɒk'tɜ:n(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to or taking place at night

**nocturnal emission** /nɒk,tɜ:n(ə)l 'ɪmɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the production of semen from the penis while a man is asleep

**nocturnal enuresis** /nɒk,tɜ:n(ə)l ,enju 'rɪ:sɪs/ *noun* the act of passing urine when asleep in bed at night. Also called **bedwetting**

**nodal** /'nəʊd(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to nodes

**nodal tachycardia** /,nəʊd(ə)l ,tæki'kɑ:diə/ *noun* a sudden attack of rapid heartbeats. Also called **paroxysmal tachycardia**

**node** /nəʊd/ *noun* a small mass of tissue

**node of Ranvier** /,nəʊd əv 'rænvɪə/ *noun* one of a series of gaps in the myelin sheath surrounding a nerve fibre. See illustration at **NEURONE** in Supplement

**nod off** /,nɒd 'ɒf/ *verb* to fall asleep (*informal*)

**nodosum** /nəʊ'dəʊsəm/ ♦ **erythema nodosum**

**nodular** /'nɒdjulə/ *adjective* formed of nodules

**nodule** /'nɒdju:l/ *noun* **1.** a small node or group of cells. ♦ **Bohn's nodules** **2.** the anterior part of the inferior vermis

**nomen proprium** /,nəʊmən 'prəʊprɪəm/ *noun* full form of **n.p.**

**non-** /nɒn/ *prefix* not

**non-absorbable suture** /,nɒn əb,zɔ:bəb(ə)l 'su:tʃə/ *noun* a suture made of a substance which cannot be absorbed into the body and which eventually has to be removed

**non-accidental injury** /,nɒn æksɪ,dent(ə)l 'ɪndʒəri/ *noun* an injury which is not caused accidentally

**non-allergenic** /,nɒn ælə'dʒɛnɪk/ *adjective* not aggravating an allergy

**non-compliance** /,nɒn kəm'plaiəns/ *noun* the failure to take drugs at the correct times and in the dosages prescribed, or to take them at all

**non compos mentis** /,nɒn ,kɒmpəs 'mentɪs/ *adjective* referring to a person who is mentally incapable of managing his or her own

affairs (NOTE: From a Latin phrase meaning 'not of sound mind'.)

**non-contagious** /,nɒn kən'teɪdʒəs/ *adjective* not contagious

**non-emergency surgery** /,nɒn ɪ,mɜ:ɟʒənsɪ 'sɜ:dʒəri/ *noun* a surgical operation which does not need to be performed immediately because it is for a condition which is not life-threatening, e.g. joint replacement. Also called **non-urgent surgery**

**non-Hodgkins lymphoma** /,nɒn ,hɒdʒkɪnz lɪm'fəʊmə/ *noun* a cancer of the lymph nodes which differs from Hodgkin's disease by the absence of a particular type of cell with double nuclei

**non-insulin-dependent diabetes** /,nɒn ,ɪnsjʊlɪn dɪ,pendənt ,dara'bitɪ:z/ *noun* same as **Type II diabetes mellitus**

**non-invasive** /,nɒn ɪn'veɪzɪv/ *adjective* referring to treatment which does not involve entering the body by making an incision. ♦ **invasive**

**non-maleficence** /,nɒn mə'leɪfɪs(ə)ns/ *noun* the concept that professionals in the health service have a duty to protect the patient from harm

**non-medical prescriber** /,nɒn ,medɪk(ə)l prɪ'skraɪbə/ *noun* a professional healthcare worker who prescribes medicine but is not a registered doctor or dentist

**non-official drug** /,nɒn ə'fɪʃ(ə)l 'drʌg/ *noun* a drug that is not listed in the national pharmacopoeia. Compare **official drug**

**non-palpable** /,nɒn 'pælpeɪb(ə)l/ *adjective* not able to be felt when touched

**non-secretor** /,nɒn sɪ'kri:tə/ *noun* a person who does not secrete substances indicating ABO blood group into mucous fluids such as semen or saliva

**non-smoker** /,nɒn 'sməʊkə/ *noun* a person who does not smoke

**non-specific** /,nɒn spə'sɪfɪk/ *adjective* not caused by any single identifiable cause

**non-specific urethritis** /,nɒn spə'sɪfɪk ,juəri'thraɪtɪs/ *noun* any sexually transmitted inflammation of the urethra not caused by gonorrhoea (*dated*) Abbreviation **NSU**

**non-steroidal** /,nɒn ste'rɔɪd(ə)l/ *adjective* not containing steroids

**non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug** /,nɒn ste,rɔɪd(ə)l ,æntɪ ɪn'flæmət(ə)rɪ drʌg/ *noun* a drug used in the treatment of pain associated with inflammation, including rheumatic disease, post-operative analgesia and dysmenorrhoea, by inhibiting the release of prostaglandins. Abbreviation **NSAID** (NOTE: Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs have names ending in **-fen: ibuprofen.**)

**non-union** /,nɒn 'ju:njən/ *noun* a condition in which the two parts of a fractured bone do not join together and do not heal

**non-urgent surgery** /ˌnɒŋ ˌɜːdʒənt 'sɜːdʒəri/ same as **non-emergency surgery**

**noradrenaline** /ˌnɔːrɪ'drenəlɪn/ *noun* a hormone secreted by the medulla of the adrenal glands which acts as a vasoconstrictor and is used to maintain blood pressure in shock, haemorrhage or hypotension

**normal** /'nɔːm(ə)l/ *adjective* usual, ordinary or conforming to a standard ○ *After he took the tablets, his blood pressure went back to normal.* ○ *Her temperature is two degrees above normal.* ○ *He had an above-normal pulse rate.* ○ *Is it normal for a person with myopia to suffer from headaches?*

**normo-** /nɔːməʊ/ *prefix* normal, usual or expected

**normoblast** /'nɔːməʊblæst/ *noun* an early form of a red blood cell, usually found only in bone marrow but occurring in the blood in some types of leukaemia and anaemia

**normocyte** /'nɔːməʊsaɪt/ *noun* a red blood cell

**normotension** /ˌnɔːməʊ'tenʃən/ *noun* blood pressure at the usual level

**normotensive** /ˌnɔːməʊ'tensɪv/ *adjective* referring to blood pressure at the usual level

**Norton score** /'nɔːt(ə)n skɔː/ *noun* a scale for deciding how likely it is that pressure sores will develop, used mostly in assessing elderly patients

**nortriptyline** /nɔː'trɪptɪliːn/ *noun* a drug used to reduce pain and as an antidepressant and tranquilliser

**nose** /nəʊz/ *noun* an organ through which a person breathes and smells

**nosebleed** /'nəʊzbliːd/ *noun* an incident of bleeding from the nose, usually caused by a blow or by sneezing, by blowing the nose hard or by high blood pressure (*informal*) ○ *She had a headache, followed by a violent nosebleed.* Also called **epistaxis**

**noso-** /nɔːsəʊ/ *prefix* disease

**nosocomial** /ˌnɔːsəʊ'kəʊmiəl/ *adjective* referring to hospitals

**nosocomial infection** /ˌnɔːsəʊ,kəʊmiəl ɪn 'fekʃən/ *noun* an infection which is passed on to a person being treated in a hospital

**nosology** /nɔː'sɒlədʒi/ *noun* the classification of diseases

**nostril** /'nɒstrɪl/ *noun* one of the two passages in the nose through which air is breathed in or out ○ *His right nostril is blocked.* (NOTE: The nostrils are also referred to as the **nares**.)

**notch** /nɒtʃ/ *noun* a depression on a surface, usually on a bone, but sometimes on an organ. † **cardiac notch**

**notifiable** /'nəʊtɪfaɪəb(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to an infectious disease which must be reported to the appropriate authorities when it occurs, so that they can attempt to control its spread

**notifiable disease** /ˌnəʊtɪfaɪəb(ə)l dɪ'ziːz/ *noun* a serious infectious disease which, in the UK, has to be reported by a doctor to the Department of Health so that steps can be taken to stop it spreading

**noxious** /'nɒkʃəs/ *adjective* harmful ○ *a noxious gas*

**n.p.** *noun* the name of the drug written on the label of its container. Full form **nomen proprium**

**NPO** *abbreviation* used to refer to patients being kept without food ○ *The patient should be kept NPO for five hours before the operation.* Full form **ne per oris**

**NSAID** *abbreviation* non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug

**NSF** /en es 'ef/ *noun* a long-term strategy for improving a specific area of healthcare across the UK. Full form **National Service Framework**

**NSU** *abbreviation* non-specific urethritis

**nucha** /'njuːkə/ *noun* same as **nape** (NOTE: The plural is **nuchae**.)

**nuchal** /'njuːk(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to the back of the neck

**nucle-** /njuːkli/ *prefix* same as **nucleo-** (*used before vowels*)

**nuclear** /'njuːkliə/ *adjective* referring to nuclei, e.g. of a cell or an atom

**nuclear magnetic resonance** /ˌnjuːkliə mægˌnetɪk 'rezənəns/ *noun* a scanning technique using magnetic fields and radio waves which reveals abnormalities in soft tissue and body fluids. † **magnetic resonance imaging**. *Abbreviation* **NMR**

**nuclear medicine** /ˌnjuːkliə 'med(ə)s(ə)n/ *noun* the use of radioactive substances for detecting and treating disorders

**nuclease** /'njuːkleɪz/ *noun* an enzyme which breaks down nucleic acids

**nucleic acid** /ˌnjuːkliːk 'æsɪd/ *noun* an organic acid of a type found in all living cells, which consists of complex nucleotide chains which pass on genetic information, e.g. DNA or RNA

**nucleo-** /njuːkliəʊ/ *prefix* referring to a cell or atomic nucleus

**nucleus** /'njuːkliəs/ *noun* 1. the central body in a cell, which contains DNA and RNA and controls the function and characteristics of the cell. See illustration at **NEURONE** in Supplement 2. a group of nerve cells in the brain or spinal cord (NOTE: The plural is **nuclei**.)

**nullipara** /nʌ'liːpərə/ *noun* a woman who has never had a child (NOTE: The plural is **nulliparas** or **nulliparae**.) ■ *adjective* referring to a woman who has never had a child

**nurse** /nɜːs/ *noun* a person who looks after sick people in a hospital or helps a doctor in a local surgery. Some nurses may be trained to diagnose

and treat patients. ○ *She works as a nurse in the local hospital.* ○ *He's training to be a nurse.* ♀

**nurse practitioner** ■ *verb* to look after a sick person, or to be employed as a nurse ○ *When he was ill his mother nursed him until he was better.*

**nurse executive director** /,nɜːs ɪg,zekjʊtɪv daɪ'rektə/ *noun* in the UK, a senior nurse who sits on the Board of an NHS Trust and has corporate as well as professional responsibilities in the organisation for nursing and sometimes other aspects such as quality or human resources

**nurse practitioner** /,nɜːs præk'tɪf(ə)nəl/ *noun* a nurse with additional clinical training at degree level who often works independently, assessing, diagnosing and treating patients, particularly in primary care

**nurse prescriber** /'nɜːs prɪ,skraɪbə/ *noun* a nurse who is qualified and entitled to prescribe medicines for patients

**nurse station** /'nɜːs ,steɪf(ə)n/, **nurses' station** /'nɜːsɪz ,steɪf(ə)n/ *noun* an area in or near a ward from which nurses work, keep records and control the activities of the ward

**nursing** /'nɜːsɪŋ/ *noun* **1.** the work or profession of being a nurse ○ *He has chosen nursing as his career.* **2.** care for sick people provided by a nurse ■ *adjective* providing care as a nurse

**Nursing and Midwifery Council** /,nɜːsɪŋ ən mɪd'wɪfəri ,kaʊnsəl/ *noun* in the UK, an organisation that sets standards for the education, practice and conduct of nurses, midwives and health visitors. Abbreviation **NMC**

**nursing audit** /'nɜːsɪŋ ɔːdɪt/ *noun* a formal detailed review of records or observation of nursing actions so that judgments can be made about the quality of nursing care being given

**nursing dependency** /'nɜːsɪŋ dɪ,pændənsi/ *noun* the extent to which a patient requires nursing care

**nursing development unit** /,nɜːsɪŋ dɪ'veləpmənt ,juːnɪt/ *noun* a nurse-led ward or unit that sets out to demonstrate by example innovative high-quality care, to reflect on practice and draw lessons from this experience, and to provide learning opportunities for other nurses. Abbreviation **NDU**

**nursing diagnosis** /'nɜːsɪŋ daɪə,gnəʊsɪs/ *noun* an assessment of the nursing needs of a patient, which forms the basis of a subsequent care plan

**nursing home** /'nɜːsɪŋ həʊm/ *noun* a house where convalescents or dependent elderly people can live under medical supervision by a qualified nurse

**nursing intervention** /,nɜːsɪŋ ɪntə'veɪʃən/ *noun* the treatment of illness by nursing care, without surgery

**nursing language** /'nɜːsɪŋ ,læŋgwɪdʒ/ *noun* the standard terminology used in nursing

**nursing model** /'nɜːsɪŋ ,mɒd(ə)l/ *noun* a set of stated principles about nursing which gives professionals a way of formulating a plan of care, assessing its success and addressing any problems which arise from it

**nursing mother** /,nɜːsɪŋ 'mʌðə/ *noun* a mother who breast-feeds her baby

**Nursing Officer** /'nɜːsɪŋ ,ɒfɪsə/ *noun* in the UK, a nurse employed by the Department of Health to assist the Chief Nursing Officer in providing professional advice to Ministers and policy-makers

**nursing practice** /'nɜːsɪŋ ,præktɪs/ *noun* treatment given by nurses

**nursing process** /,nɜːsɪŋ 'prəʊses/ *noun* a standard method of treatment and documentation of treatment carried out by nurses

**nursing standard** /'nɜːsɪŋ ,stændəd/ *noun* an accepted level of achievement by which nursing care can be assessed or compared

**nutatation** /njuː'teɪf(ə)n/ *noun* involuntary nodding of the head

**nutrient** /'njuːtriənt/ *noun* a substance in food which is necessary to provide energy or to help the body grow, e.g. protein, fat or a vitamin

**nutrition** /njuː'trɪf(ə)n/ *noun* the study of the supply of nutrients to the body from digesting food

**nutritional** /njuː'trɪf(ə)n(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to nutrition

**nyct-** /nɪkt/ *prefix* night or darkness

**nyctalopia** /,nɪktə'ləʊpiə/ *noun* the condition of being unable to see in bad light. Also called **night blindness**

**nyctophobia** /,nɪktə'fəʊbiə/ *noun* fear of the dark

**nymphae** /'nɪmfɪː/ *plural noun* same as **labia minora**

**nympho-** /nɪmfəʊ/ *prefix* **1.** female sexuality **2.** nymphae

**nymphomania** /,nɪmfə'meɪniə/ *noun* an obsessive sexual urge in a woman (NOTE: A similar condition in a man is called **satyriasis**.)

**nymphomaniac** /,nɪmfə'meɪniæk/ *noun* a woman who has an unusually obsessive sexual urge (NOTE: This term is regarded as offensive.)

**nystagmus** /nɪ'stægməs/ *noun* a rapid, involuntary movement of the eyes up and down or from side to side

**nystatin** /naɪ'stætɪn/ *noun* an anti-microbial drug used in the treatment of fungal infections, especially thrush



# O

**oat cell carcinoma** /'əʊt sel kɑːsɪnəʊmə/ *noun* a type of cancer of the bronchi, with distinctive small cells

**OB** *abbreviation* obstetrics

**obese** /əʊ'biːs/ *adjective* so overweight as to be at risk of several serious illnesses, including diabetes and heart disease

**obesity** /əʊ'biːsɪti/ *noun* the condition of being seriously overweight

**objective** /əb'dʒektɪv/ *noun* an aim or goal ■ *adjective* **1.** existing independently of any individual person's mind **2.** not influenced by any bias or prejudice caused by personal feelings **3.** referring to symptoms of illness which can be observed by somebody other than the person who is ill. Compare **subjective**

**obligate** /'ɒblɪgeɪt/ *adjective* referring to an organism which exists and develops in only one way, e.g. a virus which is a parasite only inside cells

**oblique** /ə'bliːk/ *adjective* lying at an angle

**oblique fissure** /ə'bliːk 'fɪʃə/ *noun* a groove between the superior and inferior lobes of a lung. See illustration at **LUNGS** in Supplement

**oblique fracture** /ə'bliːk 'fræktʃə/ *noun* a fracture in which the bone is broken diagonally

**oblique muscle** /ə'bliːk 'mʌs(ə)/ *noun* **1.** each of two muscles in the wall of the abdomen **2.** each of two muscles which control the movement of the eyeball

**obliterans** /ə'blɪtərəns/ ♦ **endarteritis obliterans**

**oblongata** /,ɒblŋ'geɪtə/ ♦ **medulla oblongata**

**observable** /əb'zɜːvəb(ə)/ *adjective* which can be seen or measured

**observation** /,ɒbzə'veɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the process of watching and examining a person or thing over a period of time ○ *She was admitted to hospital for observation.*

**observation register** /,ɒbzə'veɪʃ(ə)n ,redʒɪstə/ *noun* a record of children who have had problems at birth, or soon after their birth, and so need particular follow-up care from a health visitor, general practitioner or social worker

**observe** /əb'zɜːv/ *verb* **1.** to see something ○ *The nurses observed signs of improvement in the patient's condition.* ○ *The girl's mother observed symptoms of anorexia.* **2.** to watch a person or thing carefully in order to discover something ○ *Observe the way in which the patient is lying.* **3.** to take something into account ○ *You're expected to observe the rules of conduct.*

**obsession** /əb'seɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a mental disorder in which a person has a fixed idea or emotion which he or she cannot get rid of, even if he or she knows it is wrong or unpleasant ○ *She has an obsession about cats.*

**obsessional** /əb'seɪʃ(ə)n(ə)/ *adjective* referring to or having an obsession ○ *He is suffering from an obsessional disorder.*

**obsessive** /əb'sesɪv/ *adjective* having or showing an obsession ○ *He has an obsessive desire to steal little objects.*

**obsessive action** /əb,sesɪv 'æksjən/ *noun* an action such as washing which is repeated over and over again and indicates a mental disorder

**obsessive-compulsive disorder** /əb,sesɪv kəm'pʌlʃɪv dɪs,ɔːdə/ *noun* a mental disorder characterised by the need to perform repeated ritual acts such as checking or cleaning, which can be treated with psychotherapy and antidepressants. Abbreviation **OCD**

**obstetrical forceps** /əb,stetɪk(ə)l 'fɔːseps/ *plural noun* a type of large forceps used to hold a baby's head during childbirth

**obstetrician** /,ɒbstə'trɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a doctor who specialises in obstetrics

**obstetrics** /əb'stetrɪks/ *noun* a branch of medicine and surgery dealing with pregnancy, childbirth and the period immediately after childbirth. Abbreviation **OB**

**obstipation** /,ɒbstɪ'peɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* severe constipation, often caused by a blockage in the intestines

**obstruction** /əb'stræksjən/ *noun* something which blocks a passage or a blood vessel

**obstructive** /əb'stræktɪv/ *adjective* caused by an obstruction

**obstructive jaundice** /əb,strektɪv 'dʒɔːndɪs/ *noun* jaundice caused by an obstructive

tion of the bile ducts. Also called **posthepatic jaundice**.  $\diamond$  **acholuric jaundice**, **icterus gravis neonatorum**

**obstructive lung disease** /əb,strʌktɪv 'lʌŋ dɪ,zɪ:z/ *noun* bronchitis and emphysema

**obstructive sleep apnoea** /əb,strʌktɪv 'slɪ:p,æpniə/ *noun* the stopping of breathing, or difficulty in breathing, during sleep, resulting in loud snoring

**obturation** /,ɒbtjʊ'reɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the act of obstructing a body passage, or the state of a body passage when it is obstructed, e.g. by hard faeces

**obturator** /'ɒbtjʊreɪtə/ *noun* one of two muscles in the pelvis which govern the movement of the hip and thigh

**obturator foramen** /,ɒbtjʊreɪtə fə'reɪmən/ *noun* an opening in the hip bone near the acetabulum. See illustration at **PELVIS** in Supplement (NOTE: The plural is **obturator foramina**.)

**obtusion** /əb'tju:ʒ(ə)n/ *noun* a condition in which perception and feelings become dulled

**OC** *abbreviation* oral contraceptive

**occipital** /ɒk'sɪpɪt(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to the back of the head ■ *noun* same as **occipital bone**

**occipital bone** /ɒk'sɪpɪt(ə)l bæʊn/, **occipital noun** the bone at the back of the head

**occipital condyle** /ɒk,sɪpɪt(ə)l 'kɒndəl/ *noun* a round part of the occipital bone which joins it to the atlas

**occipito-anterior** /ɒk,sɪpɪtəʊ æn'tɪəriə/ *adjective* referring to a position of a baby during birth, in which the baby faces the mother's back

**occipito-posterior** /ɒk,sɪpɪtəʊ pɒ'stɪəriə/ *adjective* referring to a position of a baby during birth in which the baby faces the front

**occiput** /'ɒksɪpʌt/ *noun* the lower part of the back of the head or skull (NOTE: The plural is **occiputs** or **occipita**.)

**occlusion** /ə'klu:ʒ(ə)n/ *noun* 1. a thing which blocks a passage or which closes an opening 2. the way in which the teeth in the upper and lower jaws fit together when the jaws are closed (NOTE: A bad fit between the teeth is a **malocclusion**.)

**occlusive** /ə'klu:ʒɪv/ *adjective* referring to occlusion or blocking

**occlusive stroke** /ə'klu:ʒɪv 'strəʊk/ *noun* a stroke caused by a blood clot

**occlusive therapy** /ə'klu:ʒɪv 'θerəpi/ *noun* a treatment for a squint in which the good eye is covered up in order to encourage the squinting eye to become straight

**occult** /ə'kʌlt/ *adjective* not easy to see with the naked eye. Opposite **overt**

**occult blood** /ə'kʌlt 'blʌd/ *noun* very small quantities of blood in the faeces, which can only be detected by tests

**occupancy rate** /'ɒkjʊpənsi reɪt/ *noun* the number of beds occupied in a hospital, shown as a percentage of all the beds

**occupational** /,ɒkjʊ'peɪʃ(ə)nəl/ *adjective* referring to work

**occupational asthma** /,ɒkjʊpeɪʃ(ə)n(ə)l 'æsmə/ *noun* asthma caused by materials with which people come into contact at work

**occupational dermatitis** /,ɒkjʊpeɪʃ(ə)n(ə)l ,dɜ:mə'taɪtɪs/ *noun* dermatitis caused by materials touched at work

**occupational disease** /,ɒkjʊpeɪʃ(ə)nəl dɪ 'zɪ:z/ *noun* a disease which is caused by the type of work a person does or the conditions in which a person works, e.g. a disease caused by dust or chemicals in a factory

**occupational hazard** /,ɒkjʊpeɪʃ(ə)n(ə)l 'hæzəd/ *noun* a dangerous situation related to the working environment

**occupational health nurse** /,ɒkjʊpeɪʃ(ə)n(ə)l 'helθ ,nɜ:s/ *noun* a nurse who deals with health problems of people at work. *Abbreviation* **OH nurse**

**occupational medicine** /,ɒkjʊpeɪʃ(ə)n(ə)l 'med(ə)sɪn/ *noun* the branch of medicine concerned with accidents and diseases connected with work

**occupational therapist** /,ɒkjʊpeɪʃ(ə)n(ə)l 'θerəpɪst/ *noun* a qualified health professional who offers patients occupational therapy

**occupational therapy** /,ɒkjʊpeɪʃ(ə)n(ə)l 'θerəpi/ *noun* light work or hobbies used as a means of treatment, especially for physically challenged or mentally ill people, to promote independence during the recovery period after an illness or operation

**OCD** *abbreviation* obsessive-compulsive disorder

**oct-** /ɒkt/ *prefix* same as **octo-** (used before vowels)

**octo-** /ɒktəʊ/, **octa-** /ɒktə/ *prefix* eight

**ocular** /'ɒkjʊlə/ *adjective* referring to the eye ○ *Opticians are trained to detect all kinds of ocular imbalance.*

**ocular dominance** /,ɒkjʊlə 'dɒmɪnəns/ *noun* a condition in which a person uses one eye more than the other

**ocular prosthesis** /,ɒkjʊlə prɒs'thi:zɪs/ *noun* a false eye

**oculist** /'ɒkjʊlɪst/ *noun* a qualified physician or surgeon who specialises in the treatment of eye disorders

**oculo-** /ɒkjʊləʊ/ *prefix* eye

**oculomotor** /,ɒkjʊləʊ'məʊtə/ *adjective* referring to movements of the eyeball

**oculomotor nerve** /,ɒkjʊləʊ'məʊtə ,nɜ:zɪv/ *noun* the third cranial nerve which controls the eyeballs and eyelids

**oculonasal** /,ɒkjʊləʊ'neɪz(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to both the eye and the nose

**oculoplethysmography** /,ɒkjʊləʊ,pleθɪz'mɒgrəfi/ *noun* measurement of the pressure inside the eyeball

**OD** /aʊ 'di:/ *abbreviation* overdose

**o.d.** *adverb* (*written on a prescription*) every day. Full form **omni die** ■ *abbreviation* overdose

**ODA** *abbreviation* operating department assistant

**odoid-** /ɒdɔɪd/ *prefix* same as **odonto-** (*used before vowels*)

**odonto-** /ɒdɔntəʊ/ *prefix* tooth

**odontoid** /ɒ'dɔntɔɪd/ *adjective* similar to a tooth, especially in shape

**odontoid process** /ɒ'dɔntɔɪd 'prəʊses/ *noun* a projecting part of a vertebra, shaped like a tooth

**odontology** /,ɒdɔn'tɒlədʒi/ *noun* the study of teeth and associated structures, and their disorders

**odyn-** /ɒdɪn/ *prefix* same as **odyno-** (*used before vowels*)

**-odynia** /ə'dɪniə/ *suffix* pain

**odyno-** /ɒdɪnəʊ/ *prefix* pain

**odynophagia** /ɒ,dɪnə'feɪdʒə/ *noun* a condition in which pain occurs when food is swallowed

**oedema** /ɪ'di:mə/ *noun* the swelling of part of the body caused by accumulation of fluid in the intercellular tissue spaces ○ *Her main problem is oedema of the feet.* Also called **dropsy**. ♀ **tumescence**

**oedematous** /ɪ'demətəs/ *adjective* referring to oedema (NOTE: The US spelling is **edematous**.)

**Oedipus complex** /'i:di:pəs,kɒmpleks/ *noun* (*in Freudian psychology*) a condition in which a boy feels sexually attracted to his mother and sees his father as an obstacle

**oesophag-** /i:sɒfədʒ/ *prefix* same as **oesophago-** (*used before vowels*)

**oesophageal** /i:,sɒfə'dʒi:əl/ *adjective* referring to the oesophagus (NOTE: The US spelling is **esophageal**.)

**oesophageal hiatus** /i:,sɒfə'dʒi:əl haɪ'eɪtəs/ *noun* the opening in the diaphragm through which the oesophagus passes

**oesophageal spasm** /i:,sɒfə'dʒi:əl 'spæz(ə)n/ *noun* a spasm in the oesophagus

**oesophageal ulcer** /i:,sɒfə'dʒi:əl 'ʌlsə/ *noun* an ulcer in the oesophagus

**oesophageal varices** /i:,sɒfə'dʒi:əl 'væri:sɪz/ *plural noun* varicose veins in the oesophagus

**oesophagectomy** /i:,sɒfə'dʒektəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to remove part of the oesophagus (NOTE: The plural is **oesophagectomies**.)

**oesophagi** /i:sɒfəgi/ *plural of oesophagus*

**oesophagitis** /i:,sɒfə'dʒaɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the oesophagus, caused by acid juices from the stomach or by infection

**oesophago-** /i:sɒfəgəʊ/ *prefix* oesophagus (NOTE: The US spelling is **esophago-**.)

**oesophagogastroduodenoscopy** /i:,sɒfəgəʊ,gæstrəʊ,dju:əʊdə'nɒskəpi/ *noun* a surgical operation in which a tube is put down into the oesophagus so that the doctor can examine it, the stomach and the duodenum. Abbreviation **OGD** (NOTE: The plural is **oesophagogastroduodenoscopies**.)

**oesophagojejunostomy** /i:,sɒfəgəʊdʒɪ'dʒu:'nɒstəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to create a junction between the jejunum and the oesophagus after the stomach has been removed (NOTE: The plural is **oesophagojejunostomies**.)

**oesophagoscope** /i:,sɒfəgəʊskəʊp/ *noun* a thin tube with a light at the end, which is passed down the oesophagus to examine it

**oesophagoscopy** /i:,sɒfə'gɒskəpi/ *noun* an examination of the oesophagus with an oesophagoscope (NOTE: The plural is **oesophagoscopies**.)

**oesophagostomy** /i:,sɒfə'gɒstəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to make an opening in the oesophagus to allow the person to be fed, usually after an operation on the pharynx (NOTE: The plural is **oesophagostomies**.)

**oesophagus** /i:'sɒfəgəs/ *noun* a tube down which food passes from the pharynx to the stomach

**oestradiol** /i:ɪstrə'daɪəl/ *noun* a type of oestrogen secreted by an ovarian follicle, which stimulates the development of secondary sexual characteristics in females at puberty (NOTE: A synthetic form of oestradiol is given as treatment for oestrogen deficiency. The US spelling is **estradiol**.)

**oestriol** /i:ɪstriəl/ *noun* a placental hormone with oestrogen properties, found in the urine of pregnant women (NOTE: The US spelling is **estriol**.)

**oestrogen** /i:ɪstrədʒən/ *noun* any steroid hormone which stimulates the development of secondary sexual characteristics in females at puberty (NOTE: The US spelling is **estrogen**.)

**oestrogenic hormone** /i:ɪstrədʒenɪk 'hɔ:məʊn/ *noun* synthetic oestrogen used to treat conditions which develop during menopause (NOTE: The US spelling is **estrogenic hormone**.)

**official drug** /ə,fɪʃ(ə)l 'drʌg/ *noun* any drug listed in the national pharmacopoeia. Compare **non-official drug**

**OGD** *abbreviation* oesophagogastroduodenoscopy

**OH nurse** /,əʊ'ɪnɪʃ ,nɜːs/ *abbreviation* occupational health nurse

**-oid** /ɔɪd/ *suffix* like or related to

**ointment** /'ɔɪntmənt/ *noun* a smooth oily medicinal preparation which can be spread on the skin to soothe or to protect

**old age** /,əʊld 'eɪdʒ/ *noun* a period in a person's life, usually taken to be after the age of sixty-five

**olecranon** /əʊ'lekrənən/, **olecranon process** /əʊ'lekrənən ,prəʊsəs/ *noun* a curved projecting part at the end of the ulna at the elbow, which gives rise to a painful tingling sensation if hit by accident. Also called **funny bone**

**oleic** /əʊ'liːk/ *adjective* referring to oil

**oleic acid** /əʊ,liːk 'æsɪd/ *noun* a fatty acid which is present in most oils

**oleo-** /əʊliəʊ/ *prefix* oil

**oleum** /'əʊliəm/ *noun* oil (*used in pharmacy*)

**olfaction** /ɒl'fækjən/ *noun* **1.** the sense of smell **2.** the way in which a person's sensory organs detect smells

**olfactory** /ɒl'fækt(ə)ri/ *adjective* referring to the sense of smell

**olfactory cortex** /ɒl, fækt(ə)ri 'kɔːteks/ *noun* the parts of the cerebral cortex which receive information about smell

**olfactory nerve** /ɒl'fækt(ə)ri nɜːv/ *noun* the first cranial nerve which controls the sense of smell

**olig-** /ɒlɪg/ *prefix* same as **oligo-** (*used before vowels*)

**oligaemia** /,ɒlɪ'giːmiə/ *noun* a condition in which a person has too little blood in his or her circulatory system (NOTE: The US spelling is **oligemia**.)

**oligo-** /ɒlɪgəʊ/ *prefix* few or little

**oligodactylism** /,ɒlɪgəʊ'dæktɪlɪz(ə)m/ *noun* a congenital condition in which a baby is born without some fingers or toes

**oligodipsia** /,ɒlɪgəʊ'dɪpsɪə/ *noun* a condition in which a person does not want to drink

**oligodontia** /,ɒlɪgəʊ'dɒŋtʃə/ *noun* a state in which most of the teeth are lacking

**oligohydramnios** /,ɒlɪgəʊ'hɑː'dræmniəs/ *noun* a condition in which the amnion surrounding the fetus contains too little amniotic fluid

**oligomenorrhoea** /,ɒlɪgəʊmə'nəːriːə/ *noun* a condition in which a person menstruates infrequently (NOTE: The US spelling is **oligomenorrhoea**.)

**oligo-ovulation** /,ɒlɪgəʊ ,ɒvju'leɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* ovulation which does not occur as often as is usual

**oligospermia** /,ɒlɪgəʊ'spɜːmiə/ *noun* a condition in which there are too few spermatozoa in the semen

**oliguria** /,ɒlɪ'gjuəriə/ *noun* a condition in which a person does not produce enough urine

**-ology** /ɒlədʒi/ *suffix* area of study

**-olol** /əbəl/ *suffix* beta blocker ○ *atenolol* ○ *propranolol hydrochloride*

**o.m.** *adverb* (*written on a prescription*) every morning. Full form **omni mane**

**om-** /ɒm/ *prefix* relating to the shoulder

**-oma** /əʊmə/ *suffix* tumour

**oment-** /əʊmənt/ *prefix* omentum

**omenta** plural of **omentum**

**omental** /əʊ'ment(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to the omentum

**omentum** /əʊ'mentəm/ *noun* a double fold of peritoneum hanging down over the intestines. Also called **epiploon** (NOTE: The plural is **omenta**. For other terms referring to the omentum see words beginning with **epiplo-**.)

**omeprazole** /əʊ'meprəzəʊl/ *noun* a drug which reduces the amount of acid released in the stomach, used in the treatment of ulcers and heartburn

**omphal-** /ɒmfəl/ *prefix* same as **omphalo-** (*used before vowels*)

**omphalitis** /,ɒmfə'laitɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the navel

**omphalo-** /ɒmfələʊ/ *prefix* navel

**omphalocele** /'ɒmfələsiːl/ *noun* a hernia in which part of the intestine protrudes through the abdominal wall near the navel

**omphalus** /'ɒmfələs/ *noun* a scar with a depression in the middle of the abdomen where the umbilical cord was detached after birth. Also called **navel**, **umbilicus** (NOTE: The plural is **omphali**.)

**-omycin** /əʊmaɪsɪn/ *suffix* macrolide drug ○ *erythromycin*

**o.n.** *adverb* (*written on a prescription*) every night. Full form **omni nocte**

**onco-** /ɒŋkəʊ/ *prefix* tumour

**oncogene** /'ɒŋkədʒiːn/ *noun* a part of the genetic system which causes malignant tumours to develop

**oncogenesis** /,ɒŋkə'dʒenəsɪs/ *noun* the origin and development of a tumour

**oncogenic** /,ɒŋkə'dʒenɪk/ *adjective* causing tumours to develop ○ *an oncogenic virus*

**oncologist** /ɒŋ'kɒlədʒɪst/ *noun* a doctor who specialises in oncology, especially cancer

**oncology** /ɒŋ'kɒlədʒi/ *noun* the scientific study of new growths, especially cancers

**oncometer** /ɒŋ'kɒmɪtə/ *noun* **1.** an instrument for measuring swelling in an arm or leg using changes in their blood pressure **2.** an instrument for measuring the variations in size of the kidney and other organs of the body

**ondansetron** /ɒn'dænsɪtrɒn/ *noun* a drug which helps to prevent the production of serotonin, used to control nausea and vomiting caused by drug treatment and radiotherapy for cancer

**onych-** /ɒnɪk/ *prefix* same as **onycho-** (used before vowels)

**onycho-** /ɒnɪkəʊ/ *prefix* nails

**onycholysis** /,ɒnɪ'kɒləsɪs/ *noun* a condition in which a nail becomes separated from its bed, without falling out

**onychomadesis** /,ɒnɪkəʊmə'di:zɪs/ *noun* a condition in which the nails fall out

**onychomycosis** /,ɒnɪkəʊmaɪ'kəʊsɪs/ *noun* an infection of a nail with a fungus

**oo-** /əʊə/ *prefix* ovum or embryo

**oocyte** /'əʊʊsaɪt/ *noun* a cell which forms from an oogonium and becomes an ovum by meiosis

**oocyte donation** /,əʊʊsaɪt dəʊ'neɪf(ə)n/ *noun* the transfer of oocytes from one woman to another who cannot produce her own, so that she can have a baby. The oocytes are removed in a laparoscopy and fertilised in vitro.

**oogenesis** /,əʊə'dʒɛnəsɪs/ *noun* the formation and development of ova

COMMENT: In oogenesis, an oogonium produces an oocyte, which develops through several stages to produce a mature ovum.

Polar bodies are also formed which do not develop into ova.

**oophor-** /əʊəfəʊr/ *prefix* same as **oophoro-** (used before vowels)

**oophore** /'əʊəfəʊz/ *noun* same as **ovary**

**oophorectomy** /,əʊəfə'rektəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to remove an ovary. Also called **ovariectomy** (NOTE: The plural is **oophorectomies**.)

**oophoritis** /,əʊəfə'raɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation in an ovary, which can be caused by mumps. Also called **ovaritis**

**oophoro-** /əʊəfəʊrəʊ/ *prefix* ovary

**oophorocystectomy** /əʊ,ɒfərəʊsɪ'stektəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to remove an ovarian cyst (NOTE: The plural is **oophorocystectomies**.)

**oophorocystosis** /əʊ,ɒfərəʊsɪ'stəʊsɪs/ *noun* the development of one or more ovarian cysts

**oophoron** /əʊ'ɒfərəʊn/ *noun* same as **ovary** (technical) (NOTE: The plural is **oophora**.)

**oophoropexy** /əʊ'ɒfərəʊpeksɪ/ *noun* a surgical operation to attach an ovary (NOTE: The plural is **oophoropexies**.)

**oophorosalingectomy** /əʊ,ɒfərə'sælprɪn'dʒektəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to remove an ovary and the Fallopian tube attached to it (NOTE: The plural is **oophorosalingectomies**.)

**op** /ɒp/ *noun* an operation (informal)

**OP** *abbreviation* outpatient

**opacification** /əʊ,pæsfɪfɪ'keɪf(ə)n/ *noun* the fact of becoming opaque, as the lens does in a case of cataract

**opacity** /əʊ'pæsɪti/ *noun* the fact of not allowing light to pass through

**opaque** /əʊ'pɛɪk/ *adjective* not allowing light to pass through

**operant conditioning** /'ɒpərənt kən'dɪf(ə)nɪŋ/ *noun* a form of learning which takes place when a piece of spontaneous behaviour is either reinforced by a reward or discouraged by punishment

**operating department assistant** /,ɒpəreɪtɪŋ dɪ'pɑ:tmənt ə'sɪstənt/ *noun* a person who works in an operating department. Abbreviation **ODA**

**operating microscope** /'ɒpəreɪtɪŋ ,maɪkrəskəʊp/ *noun* a special microscope with two eyepieces and a light, used in very delicate surgery

**operating table** /'ɒpəreɪtɪŋ ,teɪb(ə)/ *noun* a special table on which the patient is placed to undergo a surgical operation

**operating theatre** /'ɒpəreɪtɪŋ ,θɪətə/ *noun* a special room in a hospital, where surgical operations are carried out (NOTE: The US term is **operating room**.)

**operation** /,ɒpə'reɪf(ə)n/ *noun* 1. a surgical procedure carried out to repair or remove a damaged body part ○ *She's had an operation on her foot.* (NOTE: A surgeon **performs** or **carries out** an operation on a patient.) 2. the way in which a drug acts

**ophth-** /ɒfθ, ɒpθ/ *prefix* eye

**ophthalm-** /ɒfθælm, ɒpθælm/ *prefix* same as **ophthalmo-** (used before vowels)

**ophthalmectomy** /,ɒfθæ'lmektəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to remove an eye (NOTE: The plural is **ophthalmectomies**.)

**ophthalmia** /ɒf'θælmɪə/ *noun* inflammation of the eye

**ophthalmia neonatorum** /ɒf,θælmɪə ,ni:əʊneɪ'tɔ:zəm/ *noun* conjunctivitis of a newborn baby, beginning 21 days after birth, caused by infection in the birth canal

**ophthalmic** /ɒf'θælmɪk/ *adjective* referring to the eye

**ophthalmic nerve** /ɒf'θælmɪk nɜ:z/ *noun* a branch of the trigeminal nerve, supplying the eyeball, the upper eyelid, the brow and one side of the scalp

**ophthalmic optician** /ɒf,θælmɪk ɒp'tɪf(ə)n/, **ophthalmic practitioner** /ɒf,θælmɪk præk'tɪf(ə)nəl/ *noun* same as **optician**

**ophthalmic surgeon** /ɒf,θælmɪk 'sɜ:dʒən/ *noun* a surgeon who specialises in surgery to treat eye disorders

**ophthalmitis** /ˌɒfθæl'maɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the eye

**ophthalmo-** /ɒfθælməʊ, ɒpθælməʊ/ *prefix* eye or eyeball

**ophthalmological** /ɒfθælmə'lɒdʒɪk(ə)/ *adjective* referring to ophthalmology

**ophthalmologist** /ɒfθæl'mɒlədʒɪst/ *noun* a doctor who specialises in the study of the eye and its diseases. Also called **eye specialist**

**ophthalmology** /ɒfθæl'mɒlədʒi/ *noun* the study of the eye and its diseases

**ophthalmoplegia** /ɒfθælmə'pli:dʒə/ *noun* paralysis of the muscles of the eye

**ophthalmoscope** /ɒfθælmə'skɒp/ *noun* an instrument containing a bright light and small lenses, used by a doctor to examine the inside of an eye

**ophthalmoscopy** /ɒfθæl'mɒskəpi/ *noun* an examination of the inside of an eye using an ophthalmoscope (NOTE: The plural is **ophthalmoscopies**.)

**ophthalmotomy** /ɒfθæl'mɒtəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to make a cut in the eyeball (NOTE: The plural is **ophthalmotomies**.)

**ophthalmotonometer** /ɒfθælmətə'nɒmɪtə/ *noun* an instrument which measures pressure inside the eye

**-opia** /əʊpiə/ *suffix* eye condition

**opiate** /'əʊpiət/ *noun* a sedative which is prepared from opium, e.g. morphine or codeine

**opistho-** /ɒpɪstəʊ/ *prefix* backbone

**opisthotonos** /ɒpɪs'thɒtənəs/ *noun* a spasm of the body in which the spine is arched backwards, occurring, e.g., in people with tetanus

**opium** /'əʊpiəm/ *noun* a substance made from poppies which is used in the preparation of codeine and heroin

**opponens** /ə'pəʊnənz/ *noun* one of a group of muscles which control the movements of the fingers, especially one which allows the thumb and little finger to come together

**opportunistic** /ɒpə'tju:nɪst/, **opportunistic** /ɒpə'tju:nɪstɪk/ *adjective* referring to a parasite or microorganism which takes advantage of the host's weakened state to cause infection

**opsonic index** /ɒp,sɒnɪk 'ɪndeks/ *noun* a number which gives the strength of an individual's serum reaction to bacteria

**opsonin** /'ɒpsənɪn/ *noun* a substance, usually an antibody, in blood which sticks to the surface of bacteria and helps to destroy them

**optic** /'ɒptɪk/ *adjective* referring to the eye or to sight

**optical** /'ɒptɪk(ə)/ *adjective* 1. same as **optic** 2. relating to the visible light spectrum

**optical fibre** /'ɒptɪk(ə)l 'faɪbə/ *noun* an artificial fibre which can carry light or images

**optical illusion** /'ɒptɪk(ə)l ɪ'lu:z(ə)n/ *noun* something which is seen wrongly so that it appears to be something else

**optic chiasma** /'ɒptɪk kaɪ'æzmə/ *noun* a structure where some of the optic nerves from each eye partially cross each other in the hypothalamus

**optic disc** /'ɒptɪk dɪsk/ *noun* the point on the retina where the optic nerve starts. Also called **optic papilla**

**optic fundus** /'ɒptɪk 'fʌndəs/ *noun* the back part of the inside of the eye, opposite the lens

**optician** /ɒp'tɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a qualified person who specialises in making glasses and in testing eyes and prescribing lenses. Also called **ophthalmic optician**

**optic nerve** /'ɒptɪk nɜ:v/ *noun* the second cranial nerve which transmits the sensation of sight from the eye to the brain. See illustration at **EYE** in Supplement

**optic neuritis** /'ɒptɪk nju'reɪtɪs/ *noun* same as **retrobulbar neuritis**

**optic papilla** /'ɒptɪk pə'pɪlə/ *noun* same as **optic disc**

**optics** /'ɒptɪks/ *noun* the study of the visible light spectrum and sight

**opto-** /ɒptəʊ/ *prefix* sight

**optometrist** /ɒp'tɒmɛtrɪst/ *noun* mainly US a person who specialises in testing eyes and prescribing lenses

**optometry** /ɒp'tɒmɛtri/ *noun* the testing of eyes and prescribing of lenses to correct sight

**-oquine** /əkwi:n/ *suffix* antimalarial drug ○ *chloroquine*

**OR** *abbreviation* US operating room

**ora** /'ɔ:rəl/ *plural noun* plural of **os** 2

**oral** /'ɔ:rəl/ *adjective* 1. referring to the mouth 2. referring to medication that is swallowed ○ *an oral contraceptive* Compare **enteral**, **parenteral**

**oral cavity** /,ɔ:rəl 'kævɪti/ *noun* the mouth

**oral contraceptive** /,ɔ:rəl ,kɒntrə'septɪv/ *noun* a contraceptive pill which is swallowed

**oral hygiene** /,ɔ:rəl 'haɪdʒi:n/ *noun* the practice of keeping the mouth clean by gargling and mouthwashes

**orally** /'ɔ:rəli/ *adverb* by swallowing ○ *not to be taken orally*

**oral medication** /,ɔ:rəl ,medɪ'keɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* medication which is taken by swallowing

**oral rehydration therapy** /,ɔ:rəl ,ri:haɪ'reɪʃ(ə)n ,θerəpi/ *noun* the administration of a simple glucose and electrolyte solution to treat acute diarrhoea, particularly in children, which has greatly reduced the number of deaths from dehydration. Abbreviation **ORT**

**oral thermometer** /,ɔ:rəl θə'mmɪtə/ *noun* a thermometer which is put into the mouth to take someone's temperature

**orbicularis** /ɔːbɪkjʊˈleəriːs/ *noun* a circular muscle in the face

**orbicularis oculi** /ɔːbɪkjʊˈleəriːs ˈɒkjʊləɪ/ *noun* a muscle which opens and closes the eye

**orbicularis oris** /ɔːbɪkjʊˈleəriːs ˈɔːrɪs/ *noun* a muscle which closes the lips tight

**orbit** /ˈɔːbɪt/ *noun* the hollow bony depression in the front of the skull in which each eye and lacrimal gland are situated. Also called **eye socket**

**orbital** /ˈɔːbɪt(ə)/ *adjective* referring to the orbit

**orchi-** /ɔːki/ *prefix* testis

**orchidalgia** /ɔːkiˈdældʒə/ *noun* a neuralgic-type pain in a testis

**orchidectomy** /ɔːkiˈdektəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to remove a testis (NOTE: The plural is **orchidectomies**.)

**orchidopexy** /ˈɔːkɪdəʊˌpeksi/ *noun* a surgical operation to place an undescended testis in the scrotum. Also called **orchiopexy** (NOTE: The plural is **orchidopexies**.)

**orchiepididymitis** /ɔːkiˌepɪdɪdɪˈmaɪtɪs/ *noun* a condition in which a testicle and its epididymis become swollen

**orchiopexy** /ˈɔːkiəʊˌpeksi/ *noun* same as **orchidopexy** (NOTE: The plural is **orchiopexies**.)

**orchis** /ˈɔːkɪs/ *noun* a testis

**orchitis** /ɔːˈkɑːtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the testes, characterised by hypertrophy, pain and a sensation of weight

**Orem's model** /ˈɔːrɛmz ˌmɒd(ə)/ *noun* a modern model for nursing which focuses on a person's ability to perform self-care, defined as activities which individuals initiate and perform on their own behalf to maintain life, health and well-being. The goal of nursing is to help people meet their own self-care demands.

**organ** /ˈɔːgən/ *noun* a part of the body which is distinct from other parts and has a particular function, e.g. the liver, an eye or ovaries

**organic** /ɔːˈgæɪnɪk/ *adjective* **1.** referring to organs in the body **2.** coming from an animal, plant or other organism

**organic disease** /ɔːˈgæɪnɪk dɪˈziːz/, **organic disorder** /ɔːˈgæɪnɪk dɪsˈɔːdə/ *noun* a disease or disorder associated with physical changes in one or more organs of the body

**organisation** /ɔːˈgənərɪˈzeɪʃ(ə)n/, **organization** *noun* **1.** a group of people set up for a particular purpose **2.** the planning or arranging of something ○ *the organisation of the rota* **3.** the way in which the component parts of something are arranged

**organism** /ˈɔːgənɪz(ə)m/ *noun* any single plant, animal, bacterium, fungus or other living thing

**organo-** /ɔːgənəʊ, ɔːgənəʊ/ *prefix* organ

**organ of Corti** /ɔːˈgən əv ˈkɔːti/ *noun* a membrane in the cochlea which takes sounds and converts them into impulses sent to the brain along the auditory nerve. Also called **spiral organ** [Described 1851. After Marquis Alfonso Corti (1822–88), Italian anatomist and histologist.]

**organ transplant** /ˈɔːgən ˌtrænzplɑːnt/ *noun* a surgical operation to transplant an organ from one person to another

**orgasm** /ˈɔːgæz(ə)m/ *noun* the climax of the sexual act, when a person experiences a moment of great excitement

**orifice** /ˈɔːrɪfɪs/ *noun* an opening in the body, e.g. the mouth or anus

**origin** /ˈɔːrɪdʒɪn/ *noun* **1.** the source or beginning of something **2.** a place where a muscle is attached, or where the branch of a nerve or blood vessel begins

**oris** /ˈɔːrɪs/ ♦ **cancrem oris, orbicularis oris**

**ornithosis** /ɔːnɪˈθəʊsɪs/ *noun* a disease of birds which can be passed to humans as a form of pneumonia

**oro-** /ɔːrəʊ/ *prefix* mouth

**orogenital** /ɔːrəʊˈdʒɛnɪt(ə)l/ *adjective* relating to both the mouth and the genitals

**oropharynx** /ɔːrəʊˈfæːrɪŋks/ *noun* a part of the pharynx below the soft palate at the back of the mouth (NOTE: The plural is **oropharynxes** or **oropharynges**.)

**ORT** *abbreviation* oral rehydration therapy

**ortho-** /ɔːθəʊ/ *prefix* correct or straight

**orthodontics** /ɔːθəʊˈdɒntɪks/ *noun* a branch of dentistry which deals with correcting badly placed teeth

**orthopaedic** /ɔːθəˈpiːdɪk/ *adjective* **1.** referring to treatment which corrects badly formed bones or joints **2.** referring to or used in orthopaedics (NOTE: The US spelling is **orthopedic**.)

**orthopaedic collar** /ɔːθəpiːdɪk ˈkɒlə/ *noun* a special strong collar to support the head of a person with neck injuries or a condition such as cervical spondylosis

**orthopaedic hospital** /ɔːθəpiːdɪk ˈhɒspɪt(ə)l/ *noun* a hospital which specialises in operations to correct badly formed joints or bones

**orthopaedics** /ɔːθəˈpiːdɪks/ *noun* a branch of surgery dealing with irregularities, diseases and injuries of the locomotor system (NOTE: The US spelling is **orthopedics**.)

**orthopaedic surgeon** /ɔːθəpiːdɪk ˈsɜːdʒən/ *noun* a surgeon who specialises in orthopaedics

**orthopnoea** /ɔːθəpˈniːə/ *noun* a condition in which a person has great difficulty in breathing while lying down. ♦ **dyspnoea** (NOTE: The US spelling is **orthopnea**.)

**orthopnoeic** /ɔːθəpˈniːɪk/ *adjective* referring to orthopnoea (NOTE: The US spelling is **orthopneic**.)

**orthoptics** /ɔ:'θɒptɪks/ *noun* the study of methods used to treat squints

**orthoptist** /ɔ:'θɒptɪst/ *noun* an eye specialist, working in an eye hospital, who treats squints and other disorders of eye movement

**orthoptoscope** /ɔ:'θɒptɛskəʊp/ *noun* same as **amblyoscope**

**orthosis** /ɔ:'θəʊsɪs/ *noun* a device which is fitted to the outside of the body to support a weakness or correct a malformation, e.g. a surgical collar or leg brace (NOTE: The plural is **orthoses**.)

**orthostatic** /ɪ,ɔ:'θə'stætɪk/ *adjective* referring to the position of the body when standing up straight

**orthostatic hypotension** /ɪ,ɔ:'θə'stætɪk ˌhaɪpəʊ'tenʃən/ *noun* a common condition where the blood pressure drops when a person stands up suddenly, causing dizziness

**orthotics** /ɔ:'θɒtɪks/ *plural noun* the branch of medical engineering which deals with the design and fitting of devices such as braces in the treatment of orthopaedic disorders (NOTE: Takes a singular verb.)

**orthotist** /ɔ:'θətɪst/ *noun* a qualified person who fits orthoses

**Ortolani's sign** /ɔ:'tɔ:lə'nɪz saɪn/, **Ortolani manoeuvre** /ɔ:'tɔ:lə'nɪ mənu:və/, **Ortolani's test** /ɔ:'tɔ:lə'nɪz test/ *noun* a test for congenital dislocation of the hip in babies aged 6–12, in which the hip makes sharp sounds if the joint is rotated [Described 1937. After Marino Ortolani (1904–83), Italian orthopaedic surgeon.]

**os** /ɒs/ *noun (technical)* **1.** a bone (NOTE: The plural is **ossa**.) **2.** the mouth (NOTE: The plural is **ora**.)

**OSA** *abbreviation* obstructive sleep apnoea

**osche-** /'ɒski/ *prefix* relating to the scrotum

**oscillation** /ɒsɪ'leɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* **1.** the action of moving backwards and forwards between two points at a regular speed **2.** a single movement between two points

**oscilloscope** /ɒ'sɪləskəʊp/ *noun* a device which produces a visual record of an electrical current on a screen using a cathode ray tube. It is used in the testing of electronic equipment and in measuring electrical impulses of the heart or the brain.

**osculum** /'ɒskjʊləm/ *noun* a small opening or pore (NOTE: The plural is **oscula**.)

**-osis** /əʊsɪs/ *suffix* disease

**Osler's nodes** /'ɒslɜz nɔʊdɪz/ *plural noun* tender swellings at the ends of fingers and toes in people who have subacute bacterial endocarditis [Described 1885. After Sir William Osler (1849–1919), Professor of Medicine in Montreal, Philadelphia, Baltimore and then Oxford.]

**osm-** /ɒzm/ *prefix* **1.** smell **2.** osmosis

**osmoreceptor** /ɒzməʊrɪ'septə/ *noun* a cell in the hypothalamus which checks the level of osmotic pressure in the blood by altering the secretion of ADH and regulates the amount of water in the blood

**osmosis** /ɒz'məʊsɪs/ *noun* the movement of a solvent from one part of the body through a semi-permeable membrane to another part where there is a higher concentration of molecules

**osmotic pressure** /ɒz,mɒtɪk 'preʃə/ *noun* the pressure required to stop the flow of a solvent through a membrane

**osseous** /'ɒsiəs/ *adjective* referring to or resembling bone

**osseous labyrinth** /'ɒsiəs 'læbərɪnθ/ *noun* same as **bony labyrinth**

**ossicle** /'ɒsɪk(ə)l/ *noun* a small bone

**ossification** /ɒsɪfɪ'keɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the formation of bone. Also called **osteogenesis**

**ossium** /'ɒsiəm/ ♦ **fragilitas ossium**

**ost-** /ɒst/ *prefix* same as **oste-** (used before vowels)

**ostectomy** /ɒ'stektəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation in which a bone, or a piece of bone, is removed (NOTE: The plural is **ostectomies**.)

**osteitis** /ɒsti'aɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of a bone due to injury or infection

**osteitis deformans** /ɒsti'aɪtɪs di:'fɔ:mənɪz/ *noun* a disease which gradually softens bones in the spine, legs and skull, so that they become curved. Also called **Paget's disease**

**osteitis fibrosis cystica** /ɒsti'aɪtɪs faɪ ˌbrʊʊsɪs 'sɪstɪkəl/ *noun* a generalised weakness of bones, caused by excessive activity of the thyroid gland and associated with formation of cysts, in which bone tissue is replaced by fibrous tissue. Also called **von Recklinghausen's disease** (NOTE: The localised form is **osteitis fibrosis localista**.)

**oste-** /ɒstiəʊ/ *prefix* bone

**osteoarthritis** /ɒstiəʊə:'θraɪtɪs/ *noun* a degenerative disease of middle-aged and elderly people characterised by inflamed joints which become stiff and painful. Also called **osteoarthritis**

**osteoarthropathy** /ɒstiəʊə:'θrɒpəθi/ *noun* a disease of the bone and cartilage at a joint, particularly the ankles, knees or wrists, associated with carcinoma of the bronchi

**osteoarthritis** /ɒstiəʊə:'θrəʊsɪs/ *noun* same as **osteoarthritis**

**osteoarthrotomy** /ɒstiəʊə:'θrɒtəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to remove the articular end of a bone (NOTE: The plural is **osteoarthrotomies**.)

**osteochondritis** /ɒstiəʊkən'draɪtɪs/ *noun* degeneration of the epiphyses

**osteochondritis dissecans** /ɒstiəʊkəndraɪtɪs 'dɪsəkənɪz/ *noun* a painful



condition where pieces of articular cartilage become detached from the joint surface

**osteochondrosis** /,ɒstiəʊkɒn'drəʊsɪs/ *noun* a disorder of cartilage and bone formation which affects the joints in children, causing pain and a limp, probably due to circulation disturbances to that part of the bone

**osteoclast** /'ɒstiəʊklæst/ *noun* a cell which destroys bone

**osteocyte** /'ɒstiəʊsaɪt/ *noun* a bone cell

**osteogenesis** /,ɒstiəʊ'dʒenəsɪs/ *noun* same as **ossification**

**osteogenesis imperfecta** /,ɒstiəʊ,dʒenəsɪs ɪmpə'fektə/ *noun* a congenital condition in which bones are brittle and break easily due to unusual bone formation. Also called **brittle bone disease**

**osteology** /,ɒsti'ɒlədʒi/ *noun* the study of bones and their structure

**osteolysis** /,ɒsti'ɒləsɪs/ *noun* destruction of bone tissue by osteoclasts

**osteolytic** /,ɒstiəʊ'lɪtɪk/ *adjective* referring to osteolysis

**osteoma** /,ɒsti'əʊmə/ *noun* a benign tumour in a bone (NOTE: The plural is **osteomas** or **osteomata**.)

**osteomalacia** /,ɒstiəʊmə'leɪʃə/ *noun* a condition in adults in which the bones become soft because of lack of calcium and Vitamin D, or limited exposure to sunlight

**osteomyelitis** /,ɒstiəʊmaɪ'laɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the interior of bone, especially the marrow spaces

**osteon** /'ɒstiən/ *noun* same as **Haversian system**

**osteopath** /'ɒstiəʊ.pæθ/ *noun* a person who practises osteopathy

**osteopathy** /,ɒsti'ɒpəθi/ *noun* **1.** the treatment of disorders by massage and manipulation of joints **2.** any disease of bone (NOTE: The plural is **osteopathies**.)

**osteopetrosis** /,ɒstiəʊpə'trəʊsɪs/ *noun* a disease of a group in which bones increase in density. Also called **marble bone disease**

**osteophyte** /'ɒstiəʊfaɪt/ *noun* a bony growth

**osteoplasty** /'ɒstiəʊplæsti/ *noun* plastic surgery on bones

**osteoporosis** /,ɒstiəʊpɔ:'rəʊsɪs/ *noun* a condition in which the bones become thin, porous and brittle, due to low levels of oestrogen, lack of calcium and lack of physical exercise. Also called **brittle bone disease**

**osteosarcoma** /,ɒstiəʊsɑ:'kəʊmə/ *noun* a malignant tumour of bone cells (NOTE: The plural is **osteosarcomas** or **osteosarcomata**.)

**osteosclerosis** /,ɒstiəʊsklə'rəʊsɪs/ *noun* a condition in which the bony spaces become hardened as a result of persistent inflammation

**osteotome** /'ɒstiəʊtəʊm/ *noun* a type of chisel used by surgeons to cut bone

**osteotomy** /,ɒsti'ɒtəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to cut a bone, especially to relieve pain in a joint (NOTE: The plural is **osteotomies**.)

**ostium** /'ɒstiəm/ *noun* an opening into a passage (NOTE: The plural is **ostia**.)

**-ostomy** /ɒstəmi/ *suffix* operation to make an opening

**OT** *abbreviation* occupational therapist

**ot-** /əʊt/ *prefix* same as **oto-** (used before vowels)

**otalgia** /əʊ'tælɟɪə/ *noun* same as **earache**

**OTC** *abbreviation* referring to medication which can be bought freely at a chemist's shop, and does not need a prescription. Full form **over the counter**

**OTC drug** /,əʊ tɪ:'si: drʌg/ *noun* same as **over-the-counter drug**

**otic** /'əʊtɪk/ *adjective* referring to the ear

**otitis** /əʊ'taɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the ear

**otitis externa** /əʊ,tɑɪtɪs ɪk'stɜ:nə/ *noun* inflammation of the external auditory meatus to the eardrum

**otitis interna** /əʊ,tɑɪtɪs ɪn'tɜ:nə/ *noun* inflammation of the inner ear. Also called **labyrinthitis**

**otitis media** /əʊ,tɑɪtɪs 'mɪdiə/ *noun* an infection of the middle ear, usually accompanied by headaches and fever. Also called **middle ear infection**, **tyimpanitis**

**oto-** /əʊtəʊ/ *prefix* ear

**otolaryngologist** /,əʊtəʊləɪrɪŋ'gɒlədʒɪst/ *noun* a doctor who specialises in treatment of diseases of the ear and throat

**otolaryngology** /,əʊtəʊləɪrɪŋ'gɒlədʒi/ *noun* the study of diseases of the ear and throat

**otolith** /'əʊtəlɪθ/ *noun* a stone which forms in the inner ear

**otolith organ** /,əʊtəlɪθ 'ɔ:ɡən/ *noun* one of two pairs of sensory organs in the inner ear, the sacculle and the utricle, which pass information to the brain about the position of the head

**otologist** /əʊ'tɒlədʒɪst/ *noun* a doctor who specialises in the study of the ear

**otology** /əʊ'tɒlədʒi/ *noun* the scientific study of the ear and its diseases

**-otomy** /ɒtəmi/ *suffix* an act of cutting into an organ or part of the body in a surgical operation

**otoplasty** /'əʊtəʊplæsti/ *noun* plastic surgery of the external ear to repair damage or deformity

**otorhinolaryngologist** /,əʊtəʊ,rɑɪnəʊ,læɪrɪŋ'gɒlədʒɪst/ *noun* a doctor who specialises in the study of the ear, nose and throat

**otorhinolaryngology** /,əʊtəʊ,rɑɪnəʊ,læɪrɪŋ'gɒlədʒi/ *noun* the study of the ear, nose and throat. Also called **ENT**

**otorrhagia** /,əʊtə'reɪdʒə/ *noun* bleeding from the external ear

**otorrhoea** /,əʊtə'ri:ə/ *noun* the discharge of pus from the ear (NOTE: The US spelling is **otorrhea**.)

**otosclerosis** /,əʊtəʊsklə'rəʊsɪs/ *noun* a condition in which the ossicles in the middle ear become thicker and the stapes becomes fixed to the oval window leading to deafness

**otoscope** /'əʊtəskəʊp/ *noun* same as **auriscope**

**otospongiosis** /,əʊtə,spɒndʒi'əʊsɪs/ *noun* the formation of spongy bone in the labyrinth of the ear which occurs in otosclerosis

**Otospirin** /'əʊtəspɪrɪn/ a trade name for ear drops containing hydrocortisone, neomycin and polymyxin

**ototoxic** /,əʊtə'tɒksɪk/ *adjective* referring to a drug or an effect which is damaging to organs or nerves involved in hearing or balance

**outcome** /'aʊtkʌm/ *noun* a measure of the result of an intervention or treatment, e.g. the mortality rate following different methods of surgery ○ *medical outcomes*

**outer** /'aʊtə/ *adjective* outside or external

**outer ear** /,aʊtə 'i:əl/ *noun* the part of the ear which is on the outside of the head, together with the passage leading to the eardrum. Also called **external ear**

**outer pleura** /,aʊtə 'plʊərə/ *noun* same as **parietal pleura**

**out-of-body experience** /,aʊt əv 'bɒdi ɪk ,spɪəriəns/ *noun* an occasion when a person feels as though they have left their body and, often, travelled along a tunnel towards a bright light

**outpatient** /'aʊtpeɪʃ(ə)nt/ *noun* someone who comes to a hospital for treatment but does not stay overnight ○ *She goes for treatment as an outpatient*. Abbreviation **OP**. Compare **inpatient**

**outpatient department** /'aʊtpeɪʃ(ə)nt dɪ ,pɑ:tmənt/, **outpatients' department** /'aʊtpeɪʃ(ə)nts dɪ ,pɑ:tmənt/, **outpatients' clinic** /'aʊtpeɪʃ(ə)nts ,klnɪk/ *noun* a department of a hospital which deals with outpatients

**outreach** /'aʊtri:tʃ/ *noun* services provided for patients or the public in general, outside a hospital or clinic

**ova** /'əʊvə/ plural of **ovum**

**oval window** /'əʊv(ə)l ,wɪndəʊ/ *noun* an oval opening between the middle ear and the inner ear. Also called **fenestra ovalis**. See illustration at **EAR** in Supplement

**ovar-** /əʊvər/ *prefix* same as **ovari-** (used before vowels)

**ovari-** /əʊvəri/ *prefix* ovaries

**ovarian** /əʊ'veəriən/ *adjective* referring to the ovaries

**ovarian cancer** /əʊ,veəriən 'kænsə/ *noun* a malignant tumour of the ovary, which occurs especially after the menopause

**ovarian cycle** /əʊ,veəriən 'saɪk(ə)l/ *noun* the regular changes in the ovary during a woman's reproductive life

**ovarian cyst** /əʊ,veəriən 'sɪst/ *noun* a cyst which develops in the ovaries

**ovarian follicle** /əʊ,veəriən 'fɒlɪk(ə)l/ *noun* a cell which contains an ovum. Also called **Graafian follicle**

**ovariectomy** /,əʊvəri'ektəmi/ *noun* same as **oophorectomy** (NOTE: The plural is **ovariectomies**.)

**ovariotomy** /,əʊvəri'ɒtəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to remove an ovary or a tumour in an ovary (NOTE: The plural is **ovariotomies**.)

**ovaritis** /,əʊvə'raɪtɪs/ *noun* same as **oophoritis**

**ovary** /'əʊv(ə)ri/ *noun* one of two organs in a woman which produce ova or egg cells and secrete the female hormone oestrogen. Also called **oophoron**. See illustration at **UROGENITAL SYSTEM (FEMALE)** in Supplement (NOTE: The plural is **ovaries**. For other terms referring to ovaries, see words beginning with **oophor-**, **oophoro-**.)

**over-** /əʊvə/ *prefix* too much

**overbite** /'əʊvəbaɪt/ *noun* the usual formation of the teeth, in which the top incisors come down over and in front of the bottom incisors when the jaws are closed

**overcompensation** /,əʊvəkɒmpən'seɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* an attempt by a person to remove the bad effects of a mistake or a fault in their character in which they make too much effort, and so cause some other problem

**overflow incontinence** /,əʊvəfləʊ ɪn 'kɒntɪnəns/ *noun* a leakage of urine because the bladder is too full

**overjet** /'əʊvədʒet/ *noun* a space which separates the top incisors from the bottom incisors when the jaws are closed

**oversew** /'əʊvəsəʊ/ *verb* to sew a patch of tissue over a perforation (NOTE: **oversewing** – **oversewed** – **oversewn**)

**overt** /əʊ'vɜ:t/ *adjective* easily seen with the naked eye. Opposite **occult**

**over-the-counter drug** /,əʊvə ðə 'kaʊntə ,drʌɡ/ *noun* a drug which you can buy from a pharmacy without a doctor's prescription. Also called **OTC drug**

**ovi-** /əʊvi/ *prefix* eggs or ova

**oviduct** /'əʊvɪdʌkt/ *noun* same as **Fallopian tube**

**ovulate** /'ɒvjʊleɪt/ *verb* to release a mature ovum into a Fallopian tube (NOTE: **ovulating** – **ovulated**)

**ovulation** /,ɒvjuˈleɪf(ə)n/ *noun* the release of an ovum from the mature ovarian follicle into the Fallopian tube

**ovum** /'əʊvəm/ *noun* a female egg cell which, when fertilised by a spermatozoon, begins to develop into an embryo (NOTE: The plural is **ova**. For other terms referring to ova, see words beginning with **oo**.)

**-oxacin** /ɒksəsɪn/ *suffix* quinolone drug ○ *ciprofloxacin*

**oxidase** /'ɒksaɪdeɪz/ *noun* an enzyme which encourages oxidation by removing hydrogen. ♀ **monoamine oxidase**

**oxidation** /,ɒksɪ'deɪf(ə)n/ *noun* the action of making oxides by combining with oxygen or removing hydrogen

**oximeter** /ɒk'sɪmɪtə/ *noun* an instrument which measures the amount of oxygen in something, especially in blood

**oxybutynin** /,ɒksɪ'bju:tənɪn/, **oxybutinin** *noun* a drug which reduces the need to pass urine

**oxycephalic** /,ɒksɪkə'fæɪlɪk/ *adjective* referring to oxycephaly

**oxycephaly** /,ɒksɪ'kefəli/ *noun* a condition in which the skull is shaped into a point, with exophthalmos and poor sight. Also called **turriccephaly**

**oxygen** /'ɒksɪdʒən/ *noun* a chemical element that is a common colourless gas which is present in the air and essential to human life (NOTE: The chemical symbol is **O**.)

**oxygenate** /'ɒksɪdʒəneɪt/ *verb* to combine blood with oxygen (NOTE: **oxygenating** – **oxygenated**)

**oxygenated blood** /,ɒksɪdʒəneɪtɪd 'blʌd/ *noun* blood which has received oxygen in the lungs and is being carried to the tissues along the arteries. Also called **arterial blood**. Compare **deoxygenated blood** (NOTE: Oxygenated blood is brighter red than venous deoxygenated blood.)

**oxygenation** /,ɒksɪdʒə'neɪf(ə)n/ *noun* the fact of becoming combined or filled with oxygen ○ *Blood is carried along the pulmonary artery to the lungs for oxygenation.*

**oxygenator** /'ɒksɪdʒə'neɪtə/ *noun* a machine which puts oxygen into the blood, used as an artificial lung in surgery

**oxygen cylinder** /'ɒksɪdʒən ,sɪlɪndə/ *noun* a heavy metal tube which contains oxygen and is connected to a patient's oxygen mask

**oxygen mask** /'ɒksɪdʒən mɑːsk/ *noun* a mask connected to a supply of oxygen, which can be put over the face to help someone with breathing difficulties

**oxygen tent** /'ɒksɪdʒən tent/ *noun* a type of cover put over a person so that he or she can breathe in oxygen

**oxygen therapy** /'ɒksɪdʒən θerəpi/ *noun* any treatment involving the administering of oxygen, e.g. in an oxygen tent or in emergency treatment for heart failure

**oxyhaemoglobin** /,ɒksi,hi:mə'gləʊbɪn/ *noun* a compound of haemoglobin and oxygen, which is the way oxygen is carried in arterial blood from the lungs to the tissues. ♀ **haemoglobin** (NOTE: The US spelling is **oxyhemoglobin**.)

**oxyntic** /ɒk'sɪntɪk/ *adjective* referring to glands and cells in the stomach which produce acid

**oxyntic cell** /ɒk'sɪntɪk sel/ *noun* a cell in the gastric gland which secretes hydrochloric acid. Also called **parietal cell**

**oxytetracycline** /,ɒksi,tetrə'saɪkliːn/ *noun* an antibiotic which is effective against a wide range of organisms

**oxytocic** /,ɒksi'təʊsɪk/ *noun* a drug which helps to start the process of childbirth, or speeds it up ■ *adjective* starting or speeding up childbirth by causing contractions in the muscles of the uterus

**oxytocin** /,ɒksi'təʊsɪn/ *noun* a hormone secreted by the posterior pituitary gland, which controls the contractions of the uterus and encourages the flow of milk

**ozone** /'əʊzəʊn/ *noun* a gas present in the atmosphere in small quantities, which is harmful at high levels of concentration

**ozone sickness** /'əʊzəʊn ,sɪknəs/ *noun* a condition experienced by jet travellers, due to levels of ozone in aircraft

# P

**Pa** *abbreviation* pascal

**pacemaker** /'peɪsməkiə/ *noun* **1.** a node in the heart which regulates the heartbeat. Also called **sinoatrial node, SA node** **2.** **♣ cardiac pacemaker, epicardial pacemaker**

**pachy-** /'pæki/ *prefix* thickening

**pachydactyly** /,pæki'dæktɪli/ *noun* a condition in which the fingers and toes become thicker than usual

**pachydermia** /,pæki'dʒ:miə/, **pachyderma** /,pæki'dʒ:mə/ *noun* a condition in which the skin becomes thicker than normal

**pachymeningitis** /,pæki,menɪn'dʒaɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the dura mater

**pachyonychia** /,pækiə'nɪkiə/ *noun* unusual thickness of the nails

**pachysomia** /,pæki'səʊmiə/ *noun* a condition in which soft tissues of the body become unusually thick

**pacing** /'peɪsɪŋ/ *noun* a surgical operation to implant or attach a cardiac pacemaker

**Pacinian corpuscle** /pə'sɪniən 'kɔ:pəs(ə)/ *noun* a sensory nerve ending in the skin which is sensitive to touch and vibrations

**pack** /pæk/ *noun* a tampon of gauze or cotton wool, used to fill an orifice such as the nose or vagina **■ verb** to fill an orifice with a tampon **○ The ear was packed with cotton wool to absorb the discharge.**

**packed cell volume** /,pækt 'sel ,vɒljʊ:m/ *noun* the volume of red blood cells in a person's blood shown against the total volume of blood. Also called **haematocrit**

**PACT** /pækt/ *abbreviation* prescribing analyses and cost

**pad** /pæd/ *noun* a piece or mass of soft absorbent material, placed on part of the body to protect it **○ She wrapped a pad of soft cotton wool round the sore.**

**paed-** /pi:d/ *prefix* same as **paedo-** (used before vowels)

**paediatric** /,pi:di'ætrɪk/ *adjective* referring to the treatment of the diseases of children **○ A new paediatric hospital has been opened. ○ Parents can visit children in the paediatric wards at any time.**

**paediatrician** /,pi:diə'trɪf(ə)n/ *noun* a doctor who specialises in the treatment of diseases of children

**paediatrics** /,pi:di'ætrɪks/ *noun* the study of children, their development and diseases. Compare **geriatrics**

**paedo-** /pi:dəʊ/ *prefix* referring to children

**paedodontia** /,pi:də'dɒnfə/ *noun* another spelling of **pedodontia**

**Paget's disease** /'pædʒət s dɪ:zɪz/ *noun* **1.** same as **osteitis deformans** **2.** a form of breast cancer which starts as an itchy rash round the nipple [Described 1877. After Sir James Paget (1814–99), British surgeon.]

**pain** /peɪn/ *noun* the feeling of severe discomfort which a person has when hurt **○ The doctor gave him an injection to relieve the pain. ○ She is suffering from back pain.** (NOTE: Pain can be used in the plural to show that it recurs: **She has pains in her left leg.**)

**pain clinic** /'peɪn ,kɪnɪk/ *noun* a centre which looks after people with severe persistent pain and whose staff include professionals from many specialist areas of medicine

**painkiller** /'peɪn,kɪlə/ *noun* a drug that reduces pain

**pain pathway** /'peɪn ,pa:θweɪ/ *noun* a series of linking nerve fibres and neurones which carry impulses of pain from the site to the sensory cortex

**pain receptor** /'peɪn rɪ,septə/ *noun* a nerve ending which is sensitive to pain

**pain relief** /'peɪn rɪ,li:f/ *noun* the act of easing pain by using analgesics

**paint** /peɪnt/ *noun* a coloured antiseptic, analgesic or astringent liquid which is put on the surface of the body **■ verb** to cause a wound with an antiseptic, analgesic or astringent liquid or lotion **○ She painted the rash with calamine.**

**pain threshold** /'peɪn ,θreʃ'həʊld/ *noun* the point at which a person finds it impossible to bear pain without crying

**palate** /'pælət/ *noun* the roof of the mouth and floor of the nasal cavity, formed of the hard and soft palates

**palate bone** /'pælət bæʊn/ *noun* one of two bones which form part of the hard palate, the orbits of the eyes and the cavity behind the nose. Also called **palatine bone**

**palatine** /'pælətəɪn/ *adjective* referring to the palate

**palatine bone** /'pælətəɪn bæʊn/ *noun* same as **palate bone**

**palatine tonsil** /,pælətəɪn 'tɒns(ə)l/ *noun* same as **tonsil**

**palato-** /pælətəʊ/ *prefix* the palate

**palatoplasty** /'pælətəplæsti/ *noun* plastic surgery of the roof of the mouth, e.g. to repair a cleft palate

**palatoplegia** /,pælətə'pli:dʒə/ *noun* paralysis of the soft palate

**palatorrhaphy** /,pælətə'ræfi/ *noun* a surgical operation to suture and close a cleft palate. Also called **staphylorrhaphy**, **uraniscorrhaphy**

**pali-** /pæli/ *prefix* same as **palin-**

**palin-** /'pæli:n/ *prefix* repeating

**palindromic** /,pæli'n'drəʊmɪk/ *adjective* recurring ○ a *palindromic disease*

**palliative** /'pæliətɪv/ *noun* a treatment or drug which relieves symptoms but does nothing to cure the disease which causes the symptoms. For example, a painkiller can reduce the pain in a tooth, but will not cure the caries which causes the pain. ■ *adjective* providing relief

**palliative care** /'pæliətɪv ,keə/, **palliative treatment** /'pæliətɪv ,tri:tmənt/ *noun* treatment which helps to reduce the symptoms of a disease, especially a terminal or chronic condition, but does not cure it

COMMENT: Palliative care may involve giving antibiotics, transfusions, pain-killing drugs, low-dose chemotherapy and psychological and social support to help the person and their family adjust to the illness. The treatment is often provided in a hospice.

**pallidotomy** /,pæli'dɒtəmi/ *noun* an operation on the brain which can reduce many of the symptoms of Parkinson's disease, such as tremor, bradykinesia and stooped posture

**pallor** /'pælə/ *noun* the condition of being pale

**palm** /pɑ:m/ *noun* the inner surface of the hand, extending from the bases of the fingers to the wrist

**palmar** /'pælmə/ *adjective* referring to the palm of the hand

**palmar arch** /'pælmə ə:tʃ/ *noun* one of two arches or joins within the palm formed by two arteries which link together

**palmar fascia** /,pælmə 'feɪʃə/ *noun* the tendons in the palm of the hand

**palpate** /pæl'peɪt/ *verb* to examine part of the body by feeling it with the hand

**palpation** /pæl'peɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* an examination of part of the body by feeling it with the hand

**palpebra** /'pælpɪbrə/ *noun* same as **eyelid** (NOTE: The plural is **palpebrae**.)

**palpebral** /'pælpɪbrəl/ *adjective* referring to the eyelids

**palpitation** /,pælpɪ'teɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* awareness that the heart is beating rapidly or irregularly, possibly caused by stress or by a disease

**pan-** /pæn/ *prefix* referring to everything

**panacea** /,pæni'si:ə/ *noun* a medicine which is supposed to cure everything

**panarthritis** /,pæni:'θraɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of all the tissues of a joint or of all the joints in the body

**pancarditis** /,pænkɑ:'daɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of all the tissues in the heart, i.e. the heart muscle, the endocardium and the pericardium

**pancreas** /'pæŋkriəs/ *noun* a gland which lies across the back of the body between the kidneys. See illustration at **DIGESTIVE SYSTEM** in Supplement

**pancreatectomy** /,pæŋkriə'tektəmi/ *noun* the surgical removal of all or part of the pancreas

**pancreatic** /,pæŋkri:'ætɪk/ *adjective* referring to the pancreas

**pancreatic duct** /,pæŋkri:'ætɪk dʌkt/ *noun* a duct leading through the pancreas to the duodenum

**pancreatic juice** /,pæŋkri:'ætɪk 'dʒu:s/, **pancreatic secretion** /,pæŋkri:'ætɪk sɪ'kri:ʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a digestive juice, formed of enzymes produced by the pancreas, which digests fats and carbohydrates

**pancreatin** /'pæŋkriətɪn/ *noun* a substance made from enzymes secreted by the pancreas, used to treat someone whose pancreas does not produce pancreatic enzymes

**pancreatitis** /,pæŋkriə'taɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the pancreas

**pancreatectomy** /,pæŋkri:'ætəmi/, **pancreatotomy** /,pæŋkriə'tɒtəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to open the pancreatic duct

**pancytopenia** /,pænsaɪtə'pi:niə/ *noun* a condition in which there are too few red and white blood cells and blood platelets

**pandemic** /pæn'demɪk/ *noun* an epidemic disease which affects many parts of the world. Compare **endemic**, **epidemic** ■ *adjective* widespread

**panhysterectomy** /,pænhɪstə'rektəmi/ *noun* the surgical removal of all the uterus and the cervix

**panic** /'pænik/ *noun* a feeling of great fear which cannot be stopped and which sometimes results in irrational behaviour ○ *He was in a panic as he sat in the consultant's waiting room.*

■ *verb* to be suddenly afraid ○ *She panicked*

when the surgeon told her she might need to have an operation.

**panic attack** /'pænik ə,tæk/ *noun* a sudden onset of panic

**panic disorder** /'pænik dɪs,ɔ:də/ *noun* a condition in which somebody has frequent panic attacks

**panniculitis** /pə,nɪkjʊ'laitɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the panniculus adiposus, producing tender swellings on the thighs and breasts

**panniculus** /pə'nɪkjʊləs/ *noun* a layer of membranous tissue

**panniculus adiposus** /pə'nɪkjʊləs ædɪ,pəʊsəs/ *noun* a layer of fat underneath the skin

**pannus** /'pænəs/ *noun* a growth on the cornea containing tiny blood vessels

**panophthalmia** /,pænoʊ'θælmɪə/, **panophthalmitis** /,pænoʊ'θælmɪ'taɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the whole of the eye

**panosteitis** /,pænoʊ'staɪtɪs/, **panostitis** /,pænoʊ'staɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the whole of a bone

**panotitis** /,pænoʊ'taɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation affecting all of the ear, but especially the middle ear

**panproctocolectomy** /,pænprɒktəkə'lektəmi/ *noun* the surgical removal of the whole of the rectum and the colon

**pant-** /pænt/ *prefix* same as **pan-**

**panto-** /pæntəʊ/ *prefix* same as **pan-**

**pantothenic acid** /pæntəθenɪk 'æ:sɪd/ *noun* a vitamin of the vitamin B complex, found in liver, yeast and eggs

**Papanicolaou test** /,pæpənɪkə'leɪu: test/ *noun* a method of staining samples from various body secretions to test for malignancy, e.g. testing a cervical smear sample to see if cancer is present. Also called **Pap test** [Described 1933. After George Nicholas Papanicolaou (1883–1962), Greek anatomist and physician who worked in the USA.]

**papaveretum** /pə,pævə'ri:təm/ *noun* a preparation of opium used to reduce pain

**papilla** /pə'pɪlə/ *noun* a small swelling which sticks up above the usual surface level ○ *The upper surface of the tongue is covered with papillae.* (NOTE: The plural is **papillae**.)

**papillary** /pə'pɪləri/ *adjective* referring to papillae

**papillitis** /,pæpɪ'laitɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the optic disc at the back of the eye

**papilloedema** /,pæpɪləʊ'di:mə/ *noun* an accumulation of fluid in the optic disc at the back of the eye

**papilloma** /,pæpɪ'ləʊmə/ *noun* a benign tumour on the skin or mucous membrane (NOTE: The plural is **papillomas** or **papillomata**.)

**papillomatosis** /,pæpɪləʊmə'təʊsɪs/ *noun* being affected with papillomata

**papillotomy** /,pæpɪ'lɒtəmi/ *noun* the operation of cutting into the body at the point where the common bile duct and pancreatic duct meet to go into the duodenum, in order to improve bile drainage and allow any stones to pass out

**papovavirus** /pə'pəʊvəvaɪrəs/ *noun* a family of viruses which start tumours, some of which are malignant, and some of which, such as warts, are benign

**Pap test** /'pæp test/, **Pap smear** /'pæp smɪə/ *noun* same as **Papanicolaou test**

**papular** /'pæpjʊlə/ *adjective* referring to a papule

**papule** /'pæpjʊ:l/ *noun* a small coloured spot raised above the surface of the skin as part of a rash (NOTE: A flat spot is a **macule**.)

**papulo-** /pæpjʊləʊ/ *prefix* relating to a papule

**papulopustular** /,pæpjʊləʊ'pʌstjʊlə/ *adjective* referring to a rash with both papules and pustules

**papulosquamous** /,pæpjʊləʊ'skweməs/ *adjective* referring to a rash with papules and a scaly skin

**para-** /pærə/ *prefix* 1. similar to or near 2. changed or beyond

**paracentesis** /,pærəsən'tɪ:sɪs/ *noun* the procedure of draining fluid from a cavity inside the body using a hollow needle, either for diagnostic purposes or because the fluid is harmful. Also called **tapping**

**paracetamol** /,pærə'sɪ:təməʊl/ *noun* a common drug used to relieve mild to moderate pain and reduce fever (NOTE: The US name is **acetaminophen**.)

**paracusis** /,pærə'kju:sɪs/, **paracousia** /,pærə'ku:sɪə/ *noun* a disorder of hearing

**paradoxical breathing** /,pærədɒksɪk(ə)l 'brɪ:ðɪŋ/, **paradoxical respiration** /,pærədɒksɪk(ə)l ,respɪ'reɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a condition affecting someone with broken ribs, where the chest appears to move in when he or she breathes in, and appears to move out when he or she breathes out

**paradoxus** /,pærə'dɒksəs/ ♦ **pulsus paradoxus**

**paraesthesia** /,pæri:'θi:ziə/ *noun* an unexplained tingling sensation. ♦ **pins and needles** (NOTE: The plural is **paraesthesiae**.)

**paraffin** /'pærəfɪn/ *noun* an oil produced from petroleum, forming the base of some ointments, and also used for heating and light

**paraffin gauze** /'pærəfɪn ɡəʊz/ *noun* gauze covered with solid paraffin, used as a dressing

**parageusia** /,pærə'ɡju:sɪə/ *noun* a disorder of the sense of taste

**paralyse** /'pærəlaɪz/ *verb* to make a part of the body unable to carry out voluntary movements by weakening or damaging muscles or nerves so that they cannot function, or by using a drug ○ *His arm was paralysed after the stroke.* ○ *She is paralysed from the waist down.*

**paralysis** /pə'reæləzɪs/ *noun* a condition in which part of the body cannot be moved because the motor nerves have been damaged or the muscles have been weakened ○ *The condition causes paralysis of the lower limbs.* ○ *He suffered temporary paralysis of the right arm.*

**paralytic** /,pærə'litɪk/ *adjective* 1. referring to paralysis 2. referring to a person who is paralysed

**paralytic ileus** /,pærə'litɪk 'ilɪəs/ *noun* an obstruction in the ileum caused by paralysis of the muscles of the intestine. Also called **adynamic ileus**

**paramedian** /,pærə'mi:diən/ *adjective* near the midline of the body

**paramedian plane** /,pærə'mi:diən ,pleɪn/ *noun* a plane near the midline of the body, parallel to the sagittal plane and at right angles to the coronal plane. See illustration at **ANATOMICAL TERMS** in Supplement

**paramedic** /,pærə'medɪk/ *noun* a person whose work involves the restoration of health and normal functioning

**parameter** /pə'reɪmɪtə/ *noun* a measurement of something such as blood pressure which may be an important consideration in treating the condition which the person has

**parametritis** /,pærə'mɪ'traɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the parametrium

**parametrium** /,pærə'mi:triəm/ *noun* the connective tissue around the uterus

**paranasal** /,pærə'neɪz(ə)/ *adjective* by the side of the nose

**paranasal sinus** /,pærə'neɪz(ə)l 'saɪnəs/,  
**paranasal air sinus** /,pærə'neɪz(ə)l 'eə ,saɪnəs/  
*noun* one of the four pairs of sinuses in the skull near the nose, which open into the nasal cavity and are lined with sticky mucus (NOTE: They are the frontal, maxillary, ethmoidal and sphenoidal sinuses.)

**paranoia** /,pærə'nɔɪə/ *noun* a behaviour characterised by mistaken ideas or delusions of persecution or self-importance

**paranoiac** /,pærə'nɔɪæk/ *noun* a person affected by paranoia

**paranoid** /'pærənɔɪd/ *adjective* having a fixed delusion

**paranoid disorder** /,pærənɔɪd dɪs'ɔɪ:də/ *noun* a mental disorder which causes someone experiencing it to believe strongly that something is not right with them, with someone else or with the world generally and to maintain the belief even when given evidence against it

**paranoid schizophrenia** /,pærənɔɪd ,skɪtsəʊ'fri:ni:ə/ *noun* a form of schizophrenia in which the person believes he or she is being persecuted

**paraparesis** /,pærəpə'ri:zɪs/ *noun* incomplete paralysis of the legs

**paraphimosis** /,pærəfaɪ'məʊsɪs/ *noun* a condition in which the foreskin around the penis is tight and may have to be removed by circumcision

**paraplegia** /,pærə'pli:dʒə/ *noun* paralysis which affects the lower part of the body and the legs, usually caused by an injury to the spinal cord

**paraplegic** /,pærə'pli:dʒɪk/ *noun* someone who has paraplegia ■ *adjective* paralysed in the lower part of the body and legs

**paraprofessional** /,pærəprə'feɪ(ə)n(ə)/ *noun* somebody with training who acts as an assistant to a professional person

**parapsychology** /,pærəsaɪ'kɒlədʒi/ *noun* the study of effects of the mind which appear not to be explained by known psychological or scientific principles, e.g. extrasensory perception and telepathy

**Paraquat** /'pærəkwoʊt/ a trade name for dimethyl dupyridilium used as a weedkiller

**parasagittal** /,pærə'sædʒɪt(ə)/ *adjective* near the midline of the body

**parasagittal plane** /,pærə'sædʒɪt(ə)l ,pleɪn/ *noun* a plane near the midline of the body, parallel to the sagittal plane and at right angles to the coronal plane. Also called **paramedian plane**. See illustration at **ANATOMICAL TERMS** in Supplement

**parasite** /'pærəsaɪt/ *noun* a plant or animal which lives on or inside another organism and draws nourishment from that organism

**parasitic** /,pærə'sɪtɪk/ *adjective* referring to parasites

**parasitic cyst** /,pærəsɪtɪk 'sɪst/ *noun* a cyst caused by the growing larvae of a parasite in the body

**parasiticide** /,pærə'saɪtɪsaɪd/ *noun* a substance which kills parasites ■ *adjective* killing parasites

**parasuicide** /,pærə'su:saɪd/ *noun* an act where someone tries to kill himself or herself, but without really intending to do so, rather as a way of drawing attention to his or her psychological condition

**parasympathetic nervous system**

/,pærəsɪmpə'θetɪk 'nɜ:vəs ,sɪstəm/, **parasympathetic system** /,pærəsɪmpə'θetɪk ,sɪstəm/ *noun* one of two parts of the autonomic nervous system. Its messages reach the organs of the body through the cranial and sacral nerves to the eyes, the gastrointestinal system and other organs. †

**sympathetic nervous system**

**parasympatholytic** /,pærəsɪm,pəθə'litɪk/ *noun* a drug which reduces the effects of the par-

asymptomatic nervous system by relaxing smooth muscle, reducing the amount of sweat and saliva produced and widening the pupil of the eye. An example is atropine. ■ *adjective* relating to a parasympatholytic drug

**parasympathomimetic** /,pærəsim'pæθəʊmɪ'metɪk/ *noun* a drug which stimulates the parasympathetic nervous system by making smooth muscle more tense, widening the blood vessels, slowing the heart rate, increasing the amount of sweat and saliva produced and contracting the pupil of the eye ■ *adjective* producing effects similar to those of a parasympathomimetic drug

**parathormone** /,pærə'θɔ:məʊn/ *noun* the hormone secreted by the parathyroid glands which regulates the level of calcium in blood plasma. Also called **parathyroid hormone**

**parathyroid** /,pærə'θaɪrɔɪd/ *noun* same as **parathyroid gland** ■ *adjective* 1. relating to a parathyroid gland 2. located close to the thyroid gland

**parathyroidectomy** /,pærə'θaɪrɔɪ'dektəmi/ *noun* the surgical removal of a parathyroid gland

**parathyroid gland** /,pærə'θaɪrɔɪd'glænd/ *noun* one of four small glands which are situated in or near the wall of the thyroid gland and secrete a hormone which controls the way in which calcium and phosphorus are deposited in bones

**parathyroid hormone** /,pærə'θaɪrɔɪd'hɔ:məʊn/ *noun* same as **parathormone**

**paratyphoid** /,pærə'taɪfɔɪd/, **paratyphoid fever** /,pærə'taɪfɔɪd'fɪ:vəl/ *noun* an infectious disease which has similar symptoms to typhoid and is caused by bacteria transmitted by humans or animals

COMMENT: There are three forms of paratyphoid fever, known by the letters A, B, and C, caused by three types of bacterium, *Salmonella paratyphi* A, B, and C. TAB injections give immunity against paratyphoid A and B, but not against C.

**paravertebral** /,pærə'vɜ:ɪtɪbrəl/ *adjective* near the vertebrae, beside the spinal column

**paravertebral injection** /,pærə'vɜ:ɪtɪbrəl ɪn'dʒɛkʃən/ *noun* an injection of local anaesthetic into the back near the vertebrae

**parenchyma** /pə'reŋkɪmə/ *noun* tissues which contain the working cells of an organ

**parenchymal** /pə'reŋkɪməl/ *adjective* relating to parenchyma

**parenteral** /pæ'rentərəl/ *adjective* referring to medication which is not given by mouth but in the form of injections or suppositories. Compare **enteral, oral**

**parenteral nutrition** /pæ'rentərəl nju:'trɪ(ə)n/, **parenteral feeding** /pæ'rentərəl'fɪ:dɪŋ/ *noun* the process of feeding someone by means other than the digestive tract, especially by

giving injections of glucose to someone critically ill

**parenting** /'peərəntɪŋ/ *noun* the activities involved in bringing up children □ **parenting skills** the abilities and experience that make someone a good parent

**paresis** /pə'ri:zɪs/ *noun* partial paralysis

**parietal** /pə'raɪət(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to the wall of a cavity or any organ

**parietal bone** /pə'raɪət(ə)l bæʊn/, **parietal** /pə'raɪət(ə)l/ *noun* one of two bones which form the sides of the skull

**parietal cell** /pə'raɪət(ə)l sel/ *noun* same as **oxyntic cell**

**parietal lobe** /pə'raɪət(ə)l ləʊb/ *noun* the middle lobe of the cerebral hemisphere, which is associated with language and other mental processes, and also contains the postcentral gyrus

**parietal pleura** /pə,raɪət(ə)l'plʊərə/ *noun* a membrane attached to the diaphragm and covering the chest cavity. Also called **outer pleura**. See illustration at **LUNGS** in Supplement

**-parin** /pəɪn/ *suffix* used for anticoagulants □ *heparin*

**Paris** /'pærɪs/ ♦ **plaster of Paris**

**parity** /'pærɪti/ *noun* 1. equality of status or position, especially in terms of pay or rank 2. the number of children that a woman has given birth to

**Parkinsonism** /'pɑ:kɪnsənɪz(ə)m/ *noun* a progressive nervous disorder, which may be an effect of some drugs, repeated head injuries or brain tumours. The main symptoms are trembling hands and a slow shuffling walk. Also called **paralysis agitans**

**Parkinson's disease** /'pɑ:kɪnsənz dɪ'zɪ:z/ *noun* a progressive nervous disorder without a known cause which is a type of Parkinsonism, the main symptoms of which are trembling hands, a slow shuffling walk and difficulty in speaking [Described 1817. After James Parkinson (1755–1824), English physician.]

**paronychia** /,pærə'nɪkiə/ *noun* inflammation near the nail which forms pus, caused by an infection in the fleshy part of the tip of a finger. ♦ **whitlow**

**parosmia** /pə'rɔ:zmiə/ *noun* a disorder of the sense of smell

**parotid** /pə'rɔ:tɪd/ *adjective* near the ear

**parotid gland** /pə'rɔ:tɪd'glænd/, **parotid** /pə'rɔ:tɪd/ *noun* one of the glands which produces saliva, situated in the neck behind the joint of the jaw and ear

**parotitis** /,pærə'taɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the parotid glands

**parous** /'peərəs/ *adjective* referring to a woman who has given birth to one or more children



**paroxetine** /pə'roʊksiti:n/ *noun* an antidepressant drug which prolongs the effects of serotonin in the brain

**paroxysm** /'pærəksɪz(ə)m/ *noun* a sudden movement of the muscles ○ *She suffered paroxysms of coughing during the night.*

**paroxysmal** /,pærək'sɪzm(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to a paroxysm, or similar to a paroxysm

**paroxysmal dyspnoea** /pærək,sɪzm(ə)l dɪsp'ni:ə/ *noun* an attack of breathlessness at night, usually caused by congestive heart failure

**paroxysmal tachycardia** /pærək,sɪzm(ə)l tæki'kɑ:diə/ *noun* same as **nodal tachycardia**

**pars** /pɑ:z/ *noun* the Latin word for part

**partially** /'pɑ:ʃ(ə)li/ *adverb* not completely ○ *He is partially paralysed in his right side.* □ **partially sighted** having only partial vision ○ *Large print books are available for people who are partially sighted.*

**partially sighted register** /,pɑ:ʃ(ə)li 'sɑ:tɪd ,redʒɪstɹəl/ *noun* a list of people who have poor sight but are not blind, and may require some special services

**partial mastectomy** /,pɑ:ʃ(ə)l mæ'stektəmi/ *noun* an operation to remove part of a breast

**partial thickness burn** /,pɑ:ʃ(ə)l 'θɪknəs ,bɜ:n/ *noun* a burn which leaves enough tissue for the skin to grow again. Also called **superficial thickness burn**

**particle** /'pɑ:tɪk(ə)l/ *noun* a very small piece of matter

**particulate** /pɑ:'tɪkjʊlət/ *adjective* referring to or composed of particles

**particulate matter** /pɑ:'tɪkjʊlət ,mætə/ *noun* particles of less than a specified size, usually of carbon, which are used as a measure of air pollution and can affect asthma

**parturient** /pɑ:'tʃʊəriənt/ *adjective* referring to childbirth

**parturition** /,pɑ:t'jʊ'rɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* same as **childbirth**

**parv-** /pɑ:v/, **parvo-** *prefix* small

**pass** /pɑ:s/ *verb* to allow faeces, urine or any other body product to come out of the body ○ *Have you passed anything this morning?* ○ *He passed a small stone in his urine.* □ **to pass blood** to produce faeces or urine that contain blood □ **to pass water** to urinate (*informal*)

**passage** /'pæsɪdʒ/ *noun* 1. a long narrow channel inside the body 2. the introduction of an instrument into a cavity

**pass away** /,pɑ:s ə'weɪ/ *verb* used to avoid saying 'die' (*informal*) ○ *Mother passed away during the night.*

**passive** /'pæsɪv/ *adjective* receiving rather than initiating an action

**passive immunity** /,pæsɪv ɪ'mju:nɪti/ *noun* immunity which is acquired by a baby in the

uterus or by a person through an injection with an antitoxin

**passive movement** /,pæsɪv 'mu:vmənt/ *noun* movement of a limb or other body part by a doctor or therapist, not by the person

**passive smoking** /,pæsɪv 'sməʊkɪŋ/ *noun* the act of breathing in smoke from other people's cigarettes when you do not smoke yourself

**pass on** /,pɑ:s 'ɒn/ *verb* 1. to give a disease to someone ○ *Haemophilia is passed on by a woman to her sons.* ○ *The disease was quickly passed on by carriers to the rest of the population.* 2. used to avoid saying 'die' ○ *My father passed on two years ago.*

**pass out** /,pɑ:s 'aʊt/ *verb* to faint (*informal*) ○ *When we told her that her father was ill, she passed out.*

**pasteurisation** /,pɑ:stʃəraɪ'zeɪʃ(ə)n/, **pasteurization** *noun* the process of heating food or food products to destroy bacteria [After Louis Pasteur (1822–95), French chemist and bacteriologist.]

**pasteurise** /'pɑ:stʃəraɪz/, **pasteurize** *verb* to kill bacteria in food by heating it ○ *The government is telling people to drink only pasteurised milk.*

**pastille** /'pæst(ə)l/ *noun* a sweet jelly with medication in it, which can be sucked to relieve a sore throat

**patch** /pætʃ/ *noun* a piece of sticking plaster with a substance on it, which is stuck to the skin to allow the substance to be gradually absorbed into the system through the skin, e.g. in HRT

**patch test** /'pætʃ test/ *noun* a test for allergies or tuberculosis, where a piece of sticking plaster containing an allergic substance or tuberculin is stuck to the skin to see if there is a reaction

**patella** /pə'telə/ *noun* the small bone in front of the knee joint. Also called **kneecap**

**patellar** /pə'telə/ *adjective* referring to the kneecap

**patellar reflex** /pə'telə 'rɪ:flɛks/ *noun* the jerk made as a reflex action by the knee, when the legs are crossed and the patellar tendon is tapped sharply. Also called **knee jerk**

**patellar tendon** /pə'telə 'tendən/ *noun* a tendon just below the kneecap

**patellectomy** /,pætə'lektəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to remove the kneecap

**patent** /'peɪtənt, 'pætənt/ *adjective* open, exposed ○ *The presence of a pulse shows that the main blood vessels from the heart to the site of the pulse are patent.*

**patent ductus arteriosus** /,peɪtənt ,dʌktəs ɑ:tɪəri'əʊsəs/ *noun* a congenital condition in which the ductus arteriosus does not close, allowing blood into the circulation without having passed through the lungs

**patent medicine** /ˌpeɪtənt ˈmed(ə)ɪn/ *noun* a medicinal preparation which is made and sold under a trade name and is protected by law from being copied or sold by other manufacturers for a certain length of time after its invention. † **proprietary medicine**

**paternity** /pəˈtɜːnɪti/ *noun* the fact of being or becoming a father ○ *paternity leave* Compare **maternity**

**paternity test** /pəˈtɜːnɪti test/ *noun* a test such as blood grouping which makes it possible to determine the identity of the father of a child

COMMENT: DNA fingerprinting may be required in order to identify a man who might be the father according to his blood group and that of the child, but is not in fact the father.

**path-** /pæθ/, **patho-** /pæθəʊ/ *prefix* referring to disease

**pathogen** /ˈpæθədʒən/ *noun* a microorganism which causes a disease

**pathogenesis** /ˌpæθəˈdʒenəsɪs/ *noun* the origin, production and development of a morbid or diseased condition

**pathogenic** /ˌpæθəˈdʒenɪk/ *adjective* causing or producing a disease

**pathogenicity** /ˌpæθədʒəˈnɪsɪti/ *noun* the ability of a pathogen to cause a disease

**pathognomonic** /ˌpæθəɡnəʊˈmɒnɪk/ *adjective* referring to a symptom which is typical and characteristic, and which indicates that someone has a particular disease

**pathological** /ˌpæθəˈlɒdʒɪk(ə)l/, **pathologic** /ˌpæθəˈlɒdʒɪk/ *adjective* **1.** referring to a disease, or caused by a disease **2.** indicating a disease

**pathological depression** /ˌpæθəˈlɒdʒɪk(ə)l dɪˈpreʃ(ə)n/ *noun* an unusually severe state of depression, possibly leading to suicide

**pathological dislocation** /ˌpæθəˈlɒdʒɪk(ə)l ˌdɪsləˈkeɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the dislocation of a diseased joint

**pathological fracture** /ˌpæθəˈlɒdʒɪk(ə)l ˈfræktʃə/ *noun* a fracture of a diseased bone

**pathologist** /pəˈθɒlədʒɪst/ *noun* **1.** a doctor who specialises in the study of diseases and the changes in the body caused by disease, examining tissue specimens from patients and reporting on the presence or absence of disease in them **2.** a doctor who examines dead bodies in order to find out the cause of death

**pathology** /pəˈθɒlədʒi/ *noun* the study of diseases and the changes in structure and function which diseases cause in the body. Also called **morbid anatomy**

**pathology report** /pəˈθɒlədʒi rɪˈpɔːt/ *noun* a report on tests carried out to find the cause of a disease

**pathophysiology** /ˌpæθəʊfɪzɪˈɒlədʒi/ *noun* the study of unusual or diseased organs

**-pathy** /pəθi/ *suffix* disease

**patient** /ˈpeɪʃ(ə)nt/ *noun* a person who is in hospital or who is being treated by a doctor ○ *The patients are all asleep in their beds.* ○ *The doctor is taking the patient's temperature.*

**patient allocation** /ˌpeɪʃ(ə)nt ˌæləˈkeɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a system of assigning each patient to a particular nurse for all their care needs

**patient-group direction** /ˈpeɪʃ(ə)nt gruːp daɪˌrekʃ(ə)n/ *noun* full form of **PGD**

**patient identifier** /ˌpeɪʃ(ə)nt aɪˈdentɪfaɪə/ *noun* a code of letters and numbers attached to the patient's medical records by which all information concerning the patient can be tracked, e.g. cause of death

**Paul-Bunnell reaction** /ˌpɔːl ˈbʌn(ə)l rɪˌækʃən/, **Paul-Bunnell test** /ˌpɔːl ˈbʌn(ə)l ˌtest/ *noun* a blood test to see if someone has glandular fever, where the person's blood is tested against a solution containing glandular fever bacilli [Described 1932. After John Rodman Paul (1893–1971), US physician; Walls Willard Bunnell (1902–66), US physician.]

**pavement epithelium** /ˈpeɪvmənt epɪˌθiːliəm/ *noun* same as **squamous epithelium**

**Pavlov's method** /ˈpævɪlɒvz ˌmeθəd/ *noun* a set of procedures for the study or production of conditioned reflexes

**PBI test** /ˌpiː biː ˈaɪ test/ *noun* same as **protein-bound iodine test**

**p.c.** /ˌpiː ˈsiː/ *adverb* (used on prescriptions) after food. Full form **post cibum**

**PCC** *abbreviation* Professional Conduct Committee

**PCG** *abbreviation* primary care group

**PCOD** *abbreviation* polycystic ovary disease

**PCOS** *abbreviation* polycystic ovary syndrome

**PCP** *abbreviation* pneumocystis carinii pneumonia

**PCT** *abbreviation* primary care trust

**p.d.** *adverb* (used on prescriptions) per day. Full form **per diem**

**PDA** /ˌpiː diː ˈeɪ/ *noun* a handheld computer with various functions, e.g. information storage and digital notetaking. Full form **personal digital assistant**

**PE** *abbreviation* pulmonary embolism

**peak expiratory flow rate** /ˌpiːk ɪk ˌspræɪəɪt(ə)rɪ ˈfləʊ ˌreɪt/ *noun* the rate at which someone can expel air from their lungs when they are full and with no time limit. Abbreviation **PEFR**

**Pearson bed** /ˈpiəs(ə)n bed/ *noun* a type of bed with a Balkan frame, a rectangular frame attached to and overhanging the bed, used mainly for people with splints

**peau d'orange** /ˌpəʊ dɒˈrɑːnʒ/ *noun* thickened skin with many little depressions caused by

lymphoedema which forms over a breast tumour or in elephantiasis (NOTE: From the French phrase meaning 'orange peel'.)

**PEC** /,pi: i: 'si:/ *noun* the committee responsible for the day-to-day management of a Primary Care Trust and for developing service policies and investment plans. Full form **Professional Executive Committee**

**pecten** /'pektən/ *noun* **1.** the middle section of the wall of the anal passage **2.** a hard ridge on the pubis

**pectineal** /pek'tiniəl/ *adjective* referring to the pecten of the pubis

**pectoral** /'pekt(ə)rəl/ *noun* **1.** a therapeutic substance which has a good effect on respiratory disease **2.** same as **pectoral muscle** ■ *adjective* referring to the chest

**pectoral girdle** /,pekt(ə)rəl 'gɜ:d(ə)/ *noun* the shoulder bones, the scapulae and clavicles, to which the upper arm bones are attached. Also called **shoulder girdle**

**pectoralis** /,pektə'reɪlɪs/ *noun* a chest muscle  
**pectoralis major** /pektə'reɪlɪs 'meɪdʒə/ *noun* a large chest muscle which pulls the arm forward or rotates it

**pectoralis minor** /pektə'reɪlɪs 'maɪnə/ *noun* a small chest muscle which allows the shoulder to be depressed

**pectoral muscle** /'pekt(ə)rəl ,mas(ə)/ *noun* one of two muscles which lie across the chest and control movements of the shoulder and arm. Also called **chest muscle**

**pectus** /'pektəs/ *noun* the anterior part of the chest

**pectus carinatum** /,pektəs ,kæri'nɑ:təm/ *noun* a condition in which the sternum is unusually prominent. Also called **pigeon breast**

**pectus excavatum** /,pektəs ,ekska'veɪtəm/ *noun* a congenital condition, in which the chest is depressed in the centre because the lower part of the breastbone is curved backwards. Also called **funnel chest**

**pedicle** /'pedɪk(ə)/ *noun* a long thin piece of skin which attaches a skin graft to the place where it was growing originally

**pediculosis** /pɪ,dɪkjʊ'ləʊsɪs/ *noun* a skin disease caused by being infested with lice

**Pediculus** /pɪ'dɪkjʊləs/ *noun* same as **louse** (NOTE: The plural is **Pediculi**.)

**Pediculus capitis** /pɪ,dɪkjʊləs kə'paɪtɪs/ *noun* same as **head louse**

**pedo-** /pɪ:d/ *prefix* same as **paedo-**

**pedodontia** /,pɪ:də'dɒnʃə/ *noun* the study of children's teeth

**pedodontist** /,pɪ:də'dɒntɪst/ *noun* a dentist who specialises in the treatment of children's teeth

**peduncle** /pɪ'dʌŋkəl/ *noun* a stem or stalk

**pee** /pi:/ *verb* same as **urinate** (*informal*)

**peel** /pi:l/ *verb* **1.** to take the skin off a fruit or vegetable **2.** (*of skin*) to come off in pieces ○ *After getting sunburnt, his skin began to peel.*

**PEEP** *abbreviation* positive end-expiratory pressure

**peer review** /'pɪə rɪ,vju:/ *noun* an assessment of a piece of someone's work by people who are experts on the subject

**PEFR** *abbreviation* peak expiratory flow rate

**Pel-Ebstein fever** /,pel 'ebstaɪn ,fi:vəl/ *noun* a fever associated with Hodgkin's disease which recurs regularly [Described 1885. After Pieter Klaases Pel (1852–1919), Professor of Medicine in Amsterdam, Netherlands; Wilhelm Ebstein (1836–1912), Professor of Medicine at Göttingen, Germany.]

**pellagra** /pə'lægrə/ *noun* a disease caused by a deficiency of nicotinic acid, riboflavine and pyridoxine from the vitamin B complex, where patches of skin become inflamed, and the person has anorexia, nausea and diarrhoea

**pellet** /'pelɪt/ *noun* a small rod- or oval-shaped pill of steroid hormone, usually either oestrogen or testosterone, that is implanted under the skin for slow absorption

**pelvic** /'pelvɪk/ *adjective* referring to the pelvis

**pelvic brim** /,pelvɪk 'brɪm/ *noun* a line on the ilium which separates the false pelvis from the true pelvis

**pelvic cavity** /,pelvɪk 'kævɪti/ *noun* a space below the abdominal cavity, above the pelvis

**pelvic colon** /,pelvɪk 'kəʊlən/ *noun* same as **sigmoid colon**

**pelvic diaphragm** /,pelvɪk 'dɪəʃræm/ *noun* a sheet of muscle between the pelvic cavity and the peritoneum

**pelvic floor** /,pelvɪk 'flɔ:/ *noun* the lower part of the space beneath the pelvic girdle, formed of muscle

**pelvic fracture** /,pelvɪk 'fræktʃə/ *noun* a fracture of the pelvis

**pelvic girdle** /,pelvɪk 'gɜ:d(ə)/ *noun* the ring formed by the two hip bones to which the thigh bones are attached. Also called **hip girdle**

**pelvic inflammatory disease** /,pelvɪk ɪn 'flæmə(ə)rɪ dɪ,zɪ:z/ *noun* an inflammation of a woman's reproductive organs in the pelvic area, which can cause infertility

**pelvic outlet** /,pelvɪk 'aʊtlet/ *noun* an opening at the base of the pelvis

**pelvimeter** /pel'vɪmɪtə/ *noun* an instrument to measure the diameter and capacity of the pelvis

**pelvimetry** /pel'vɪmɪtri/ *noun* the act of measuring the pelvis, especially to see if the internal ring is wide enough for a baby to pass through in childbirth

**pelvis** /'pelvɪs/ *noun* **1.** the strong basin-shaped ring of bone near the bottom of the spine, formed of the hip bones at the front and sides and the sacrum and coccyx at the back **2.** the internal space inside the pelvic girdle (NOTE: [all senses] The plural is **pelvices** or **pelves**.)

**pelvis of the kidney** /,pelvɪs əv ðə 'kɪdni/ *noun* see illustration at **KIDNEY** in Supplement (NOTE: For other terms referring to the pelvis of the kidney, see words beginning with **pyel-**, **pyelo-**)

**pemphigoid** /'pemfɪɡɔɪd/ *noun* a skin disease which is similar to pemphigus ■ *adjective* referring to a skin disease similar to pemphigus

**pemphigus** /'pemfɪɡəs/ *noun* a rare disease where large blisters form inside the skin

**pendulous** /'pendjʊləs/ *adjective* referring to an object or body part which hangs loosely or swings freely

**-penia** /'pi:niə/ *suffix* meaning a deficiency or not enough of something

**penicillamine** /,penɪ'sɪlami:n/ *noun* a chelating agent which is used to help the body get rid of toxic metals

**penicillin** /,penɪ'sɪlɪn/ *noun* a common antibiotic originally produced from a fungus (NOTE: Penicillin drugs have names ending in **-cillin**: **amoxicillin**.)

**penicillin resistance** /,penɪ'sɪlɪn rɪ'zɪstəns/ *noun* the ability of bacteria to resist penicillin

**Penicillium** /,penɪ'sɪliəm/ *noun* the fungus from which penicillin is derived

**penile** /'pi:nəl/ *adjective* referring to the penis

**penis** /'pi:nɪs/ *noun* the male genital organ, which also passes urine. See illustration at **UROGENITAL SYSTEM (MALE)** in Supplement. ♀ **kraurosis penis**

**pentamidine** /pen'tæmɪdi:n/ *noun* an antibiotic used in the treatment of African sleeping sickness and of pneumonia in people with AIDS

**pentazocine** /pen'tæzəsi:n/ *noun* an artificially produced narcotic drug used to reduce pain

**Pentothal** /'pentəθæl/ a trade name for thiopentone

**PEP** *abbreviation* post-exposure prophylaxis

**Peplau's model** /'pepləʊz ,mɒd(ə)/ *noun* a model for nursing which describes the individual as a system with physiological, psychological and social components. The nurse and patient work together to define the patient's problems and to understand their reactions to one another, and the nurse takes on different roles in each phase of the relationship, such as a teacher, counsellor, leader, and technical expert, until the patient no longer needs their care.

**pepsin** /'pepsɪn/ *noun* an enzyme in the stomach which breaks down the proteins in food into peptones

**pepsinogen** /pɛp'sɪnədʒən/ *noun* a secretion from the gastric gland which is the inactive form of pepsin

**peptic** /'peptɪk/ *adjective* referring to digestion or to the digestive system

**peptic ulcer** /,peptɪk 'ʌlsə/ *noun* a benign ulcer in the duodenum or in the stomach

**peptidase** /'peptɪdeɪz/ *noun* an enzyme which breaks down proteins in the intestine into amino acids

**peptide** /'peptəɪd/ *noun* a compound formed of two or more amino acids

**per** /pɜ:ɪ, pə/ *preposition* **1.** out of each ○ *ten per thousand* **2.** by or through ○ *per rectum*

**perception** /pə'sepʃən/ *noun* an impression formed in the brain as a result of information about the outside world which is passed back by the senses

**perceptive deafness** /pe,septɪv 'defnəs/ *noun* same as **sensorineural deafness**

**percussion** /pə'kʌʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a test, usually on the heart and lungs, in which the doctor taps part of the person's body and listens to the sound produced

**percutaneous** /,pɜ:kju:'teɪniəs/ *adjective* through the skin

**percutaneous absorption** /,pɜ:kju:'teɪniəs əb'zɔ:pʃən/ *noun* the process of absorbing a substance through the skin

**percutaneous angioplasty** /,pɜ:kju:'teɪniəs 'ændʒɪəplæstɪ/ *noun* the repair of a narrowed artery by passing a balloon into the artery through a catheter and then inflating it. Also called **balloon angioplasty**

**percutaneous epididymal sperm aspiration** /,pɜ:kju:'teɪniəs ,epɪdɪdɪm(ə)l 'spɜ:m ,æspɪreɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the removal of sperm from the epididymis by withdrawing it through the skin, usually as part of fertility treatment. Abbreviation **PESA**

**per diem** /,pɜ:'di:em/ *adverb* (*written on prescriptions*) per day

**perforated eardrum** /,pɜ:fəreɪtɪd 'ɪədrʌm/ *noun* an eardrum with a hole in it

**perforation** /,pɜ:fə'reɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a hole through the whole thickness of a tissue or membrane such as the intestine or eardrum

**performance indicators** /pə'fɔ:məns ,ɪndɪkeɪtəz/ *plural noun* statistical information needed for analysis of how effectively health organisations are meeting their objectives, produced by health authorities and sent to the government. Abbreviation **PIs**

**perfusion** /pə'fju:ʒ(ə)n/ *noun* the process of passing a liquid through vessels, an organ or tissue, e.g. the flow of blood into lung tissue

**perfusion scan** /pə'fju:ʒ(ə)n skæn/ *noun* a procedure in which radioactive or radiopaque

substances are introduced into the body so that the blood supply of an organ can be traced

**peri-** /peri/ *prefix* near, around or enclosing

**peradenitis** /,periədɪ'naitɪs/ *noun* inflammation of tissue around a gland

**perianal** /,peri'eɪn(ə)l/ *adjective* around the anus

**periarthritis** /,periɑ:tə'raɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the outer coat of an artery and the tissue round it

**periarthritis nodosa** /,periɑ:tə'raɪtɪs nəʊ 'dɔʊsəl/ *noun* same as **polyarthritis nodosa**

**periarthrit** /,periɑ:'θraɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the tissue round a joint

**pericard-** /perɪkɑ:d/ *prefix* referring to the pericardium

**pericardectomy** /,perɪkɑ:'dektəmi/ *noun* the surgical removal of the pericardium

**pericardial** /,peri'kɑ:diəl/ *adjective* referring to the pericardium

**pericardial effusion** /,perɪkɑ:diəl ɪ 'fju:ʒ(ə)n/ *noun* an excess of fluid which forms in the pericardial sac

**pericardial sac** /,perɪkɑ:diəl 'sæk/ *noun* the inner part of the pericardium forming a bag-like structure or sac which contains fluid to prevent the two parts of the pericardium rubbing together

**pericardiectomy** /,perɪkɑ:di'ektəmi/ *noun* same as **pericardectomy**

**pericardiocentesis** /,peri,kɑ:diəʊsen'ti:sɪs/ *noun* the puncture of the pericardium to remove fluid

**pericardiorrhaphy** /,perɪkɑ:di'ɔ:rəfi/ *noun* a surgical operation to repair a wound in the pericardium

**pericardiostomy** /,perɪkɑ:di'ɔ:stəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to open the pericardium through the thoracic wall to drain off fluid

**pericardiotomy** /,perɪkɑ:di'ɔ:təmi/ *noun* same as **pericardotomy**

**pericarditis** /,perɪkɑ:'daɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the pericardium

**pericardium** /,peri'kɑ:diəm/ *noun* a membrane which surrounds and supports the heart

**pericardotomy** /,perɪkɑ:'dɔ:təmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to open the pericardium

**perichondritis** /,perɪkɒn'draɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of cartilage, especially in the outer ear

**perichondrium** /,peri'kɒndriəm/ *noun* the fibrous connective tissue which covers cartilage

**pericranium** /,peri'kreɪniəm/ *noun* connective tissue which covers the surface of the skull

**perilymph** /'perɪlɪmf/ *noun* a fluid found in the labyrinth of the inner ear

**perimenopause** /,peri'menəpɔ:z/ *noun* the few years before the menopause, in which oestrogen levels start to fall

**perimeter** /pə'rɪmɪtə/ *noun* **1.** an instrument to measure the field of vision **2.** the length of the outside line around an enclosed area

**perimetritis** /,perɪmə'traɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the perimetrium

**perimetrium** /,peri'mi:triəm/ *noun* a membrane round the uterus

**perimetry** /pə'rɪmɪtri/ *noun* a measurement of the field of vision

**perimysium** /,peri'maɪsiəm/ *noun* a sheath which surrounds a bundle of muscle fibres

**perinatal** /,peri'neɪt(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to the period just before and after childbirth

**perinatal mortality rate** /,perɪneɪt(ə)l mɔ: 'tælɪtɪ reɪt/ *noun* the number of babies born dead or who die during the period immediately after childbirth, shown per thousand babies born

**perinatal period** /,peri'neɪt(ə)l ,pɪəriəd/ *noun* the period of time before and after childbirth, from the 28th week after conception to the first week after delivery

**perinatologist** /,perɪnə'tɒlədʒɪst/ *noun* an obstetrician who is a specialist in perinatology

**perinatology** /,perɪnə'tɒlədʒɪ/ *noun* a branch of medicine which studies and treats physiological and pathological conditions affecting the mother and/or infant just before and just after the birth of a baby

**perineal** /,peri'ni:əl/ *adjective* referring to the perineum

**perineoplasty** /,peri'ni:əplæsti/ *noun* a surgical operation to repair the perineum by grafting tissue

**perineorrhaphy** /,perɪni'ɔ:rəfi/ *noun* a surgical operation to stitch up a perineum which has torn during childbirth

**perinephric** /,peri'nefrɪk/ *adjective* around the kidney

**perinephritis** /,perɪni'fraɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of tissue round the kidney, which spreads from an infected kidney

**perineum** /,peri'ni:əm/ *noun* the skin and tissue between the opening of the urethra and the anus

**perineurium** /,peri'njʊəriəm/ *noun* connective tissue which surrounds bundles of nerve fibres

**periocular** /,peri'ɔ:kjʊlə/ *adjective* around the eyeball

**periodic** /,pɪəri'ɒdɪk/ *adjective* occurring from time to time ○ *He has periodic attacks of migraine.* ○ *She has to go to the clinic for periodic checkups.*

**periodic fever** /ˌpɪərɪɒdɪk 'fi:vəl/ *noun* a disease of the kidneys, common in Mediterranean countries

**periodic paralysis** /ˌpɪərɪɒdɪk pə'ræləsɪs/ *noun* recurrent attacks of weakness where the level of potassium in the blood is low

**periodontal** /ˌpɪəriəʊ'dɒnt(ə)l/, **periodontic** /ˌpɪəriəʊ'dɒntɪk/ *adjective* referring to the area around the teeth

**periodontal membrane** /ˌpɪəriəʊ'dɒnt(ə)l 'membreɪn/, **periodontal ligament** /ˌpɪəriəʊ'dɒnt(ə)l 'lɪɡəmənt/ *noun* a ligament which attaches a tooth to the bone of the jaw

**periodontics** /ˌpɪəriəʊ'dɒntɪks/, **periodontia** /ˌpɪəriəʊ'dɒnʃəl/ *noun* the study of diseases of the periodontal membrane

**periodontist** /ˌpɪəriəʊ'dɒntɪst/ *noun* a dentist who specialises in the treatment of gum diseases

**periodontitis** /ˌpɪəriəʊ'dɒn'taɪtɪs/ *noun* an infection of the periodontal membrane leading to pyorrhoea, and resulting in the teeth falling out if untreated

**periodontium** /ˌpɪəriəʊ'dɒnʃɪəm/ *noun* 1. the gums, bone and periodontal membrane around a tooth 2. same as **periodontal membrane**

**perionychia** /ˌpɪəriəʊ'nɪkiə/, **perionyxis** /ˌpɪəriəʊ'nɪksɪs/ *noun* a painful swelling round a fingernail

**perioperative** /ˌpɪəri'ɒp(ə)rətɪv/ *adjective* before and after a surgical operation

**periobital** /ˌpɪəriəʊ'ɔ:bɪt(ə)l/ *adjective* around the eye socket

**periosteal** /ˌpɪəri'ɒstɪəl/ *adjective* referring to, or attached to, the periosteum

**periosteotome** /ˌpɪəri'ɒstɪəʊtəʊm/ *noun* a surgical instrument used to cut the periosteum

**periosteum** /ˌpɪəri'ɒstɪəm/ *noun* a dense layer of connective tissue around a bone. See illustration at **BONE STRUCTURE** in Supplement

**periosteum elevator** /ˌpɪəri'ɒstɪəm 'eləvətə/ *noun* a surgical instrument used to remove the periosteum from a bone

**periostitis** /ˌpɪəri'ɒstɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the periosteum

**peripheral** /pə'rɪf(ə)rəl/ *adjective* at the edge

**peripheral nerves** /pə'rɪf(ə)rəl nɜ:vz/ *plural noun* the parts of motor and sensory nerves which branch from the brain and spinal cord

**peripheral nervous system** /pə'rɪf(ə)rəl 'nɜ:vəs 'sɪstəm/ *noun* all the nerves in different parts of the body which are linked and governed by the central nervous system. Abbreviation **PNS**

**peripheral resistance** /pə'rɪf(ə)rəl rɪ 'zɪstəns/ *noun* the ability of the peripheral blood vessels to slow down the flow of blood inside them

**peripheral vascular disease** /pə'rɪf(ə)rəl 'væskjələ dɪ,zɪz:z/ *noun* a disease affecting the blood vessels which supply the arms and legs

**peripheral vasodilator** /pə'rɪf(ə)rəl 'veɪzəʊdɪlə'tɔ:lət/ *noun* a chemical substance which acts to widen the blood vessels in the arms and legs and so improves bad circulation

**periphery** /pə'rɪf(ə)rɪ/ *noun* 1. the regions of the body where the nerves end, such as the sense organs or the muscles 2. the surface of something

**periproctitis** /ˌpɛrɪprɒk'taɪtɪs/ *noun* swelling of the tissues around the rectum

**peristalsis** /ˌpɛrɪ'stælsɪs/ *noun* the movement, like waves, produced by alternate contraction and relaxation of muscles along an organ such as the intestine or oesophagus, which pushes the contents of the organ along it. Compare **antiperistalsis**

**peristaltic** /ˌpɛrɪ'stæltɪk/ *adjective* occurring in waves, as in peristalsis

**peritendinitis** /ˌpɛrɪtɛndɪ'natɪtɪs/ *noun* same as **tenosynovitis**

**peritoneal** /ˌpɛrɪtə'ni:əl/ *adjective* referring to, or belonging to, the peritoneum

**peritoneal cavity** /ˌpɛrɪtəni:əl 'kævɪti/ *noun* a space between the layers of the peritoneum, containing the major organs of the abdomen

**peritoneal dialysis** /ˌpɛrɪtəni:əl daɪ'æləsɪs/ *noun* removing waste matter from someone's blood by introducing fluid into the peritoneum which then acts as a filter, as opposed to haemodialysis

**peritoneoscope** /ˌpɛrɪ'təʊniəskəʊp/ *noun* same as **laparoscope**

**peritoneoscopy** /ˌpɛrɪtəʊni'ɒskəpi/ *noun* same as **laparoscopy**

**peritoneum** /ˌpɛrɪtə'ni:əm/ *noun* a membrane which lines the abdominal cavity and covers the organs in it

**peritonitis** /ˌpɛrɪtə'natɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the peritoneum as a result of bacterial infection

**peritonsillar** /ˌpɛrɪ'tɒnsɪlə/ *adjective* around the tonsils

**peritonsillar abscess** /ˌpɛrɪtɒnsɪlə 'æbsɛs/ *noun* same as **quinsy**

**perityphlitis** /ˌpɛrɪtɪ'flaɪtɪs/ *noun* swelling of the tissues around the caecum

**PERLA** *abbreviation* Pupils Equal and Reactive to Light and Accommodation

**perle** /pɜ:l/ *noun* a soft capsule of medicine

**perleche** /pɜ:'leʃ/ *noun* inflammation, with small cracks, at the corners of the mouth, caused by infection, poor diet, or producing too much saliva

**permeability** /ˌpɜ:mɪə'bɪlɪti/ *noun* (of a membrane) the ability to allow some substances to pass through

**permeable membrane** /,pɜ:miəb(ə)l 'membreɪn/ *noun* a membrane which allows some substances to pass through it

**pernicious** /pə'niʃəs/ *adjective* harmful or dangerous, or unusually severe and likely to end in death

**pernicious anaemia** /pə,niʃəs ə'ni:miə/ *noun* a disease where an inability to absorb vitamin B<sub>12</sub> prevents the production of red blood cells and damages the spinal cord. Also called **Addison's anaemia**

**perniosis** /,pɜ:ni'əʊsɪs/ *noun* any condition caused by cold which affects blood vessels in the skin

**per-** /pɜrəʊ/ *prefix* malformed or impaired

**peroneal** /,pɜrəʊ'ni:əl/ *adjective* referring to the outside of the leg

**peroneal muscle** /,pɜrəʊ'ni:əl ,mʌs(ə)l/, **peroneus** /,pɜrəʊ'ni:əs/ *noun* one of three muscles, the peroneus brevis, longus and tertius, on the outside of the lower leg which make the leg turn outwards

**peroperative** /pə'rɒp(ə)rətɪv/ *adjective* taking place during a surgical operation

**peroral** /pə'rɔ:ɪrəl/ *adjective* through the mouth

**per os** /pɜr 'ɒs/ *adverb* referring to a drug or other substance to be taken through the mouth

**persistent vegetative state** /pə,sɪstənt 'vedʒɪtətɪv steɪt/ *noun* a condition in which someone is alive and breathes, but shows no brain activity, and will never recover consciousness. Abbreviation **PVS**

**personal care** /'pɜ:s(ə)nəl keə/ *noun* the act of washing, toileting and dressing someone who cannot do these things for themselves

**personal digital assistant** /,pɜ:s(ə)n(ə)l ,dɪdʒɪt(ə)l ə'sɪstənt/ *noun* full form of **PDA**

**personal hygiene** /,pɜ:s(ə)n(ə)l 'hɑ:dʒi:n/ *noun* the standards someone has of looking after parts of their body such as hair, skin, teeth and breath, hands and nails, and keeping them clean

**personality** /,pɜ:s(ə)'næltɪ/ *noun* all the characteristics which are typical of one particular person and the way he or she thinks and behaves, and which make him or her different from other people

**personality disorder** /,pɜ:s(ə)'næltɪ dɪs ,ɔ:ɪdəl/ *noun* a disorder which affects the way a person behaves, especially in relation to other people

**perspiration** /,pɜ:spə'reɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* sweat or the action of sweating ○ *Perspiration broke out on her forehead.*

**Perthes' disease** /'pɜ:ti:z dɪ,zɪ:z/, **Perthes' hip** /,pɜ:ti:z 'hɪp/ *noun* a disease found in young boys, in which the upper end of the femur degenerates and does not develop as expected, sometimes resulting in a permanent limp

**pertussis** /pə'tʌsɪs/ *noun* same as **whooping cough**

**perversion** /pə'vɜ:ʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a form of behaviour which is thought to be unnatural, dangerous or disgusting ○ *He is suffering from a form of sexual perversion.*

**pes** /pes/ *noun* a foot

**PESA** *abbreviation* percutaneous epididymal sperm aspiration

**pes cavus** /,pes 'keɪvəs/ *noun* same as **claw foot**

**pes planus** /,pes 'pleɪnəs/ *noun* same as **flat foot**

**pessary** /'pesəri/ *noun* **1.** a drug in soluble material which is pushed into the vagina and absorbed into the blood there. Also called **vaginal suppository** **2.** a contraceptive device worn inside the vagina to prevent spermatozoa entering **3.** a device like a ring, which is put into the vagina as treatment for prolapse of the uterus

**pesticide** /'pestɪsaɪd/ *noun* a substance which kills pests

**PET** *abbreviation* positron-emission tomography

**petechia** /pe'ti:kiə/ *noun* a small red spot which does not go white when pressed, caused by bleeding under the skin (NOTE: The plural is **petechiae**.)

**pethidine** /'peθɪdɪn/ *noun* a synthetically produced narcotic drug, used to reduce pain and as a sedative

**petit mal** /,peti 'mæl/ *noun* a less severe form of epilepsy, where loss of consciousness attacks last only a few seconds and the person appears simply to be thinking deeply. Compare **grand mal**

**Petri dish** /'pi:tri dɪʃ/ *noun* a small glass or plastic dish with a lid, in which a culture is grown

**petrissage** /,petrɪ'sɑ:ʒ/ *noun* an action used in massaging the muscles

**petrositis** /,petrəʊ'saɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the petrous part of the temporal bone

**petrous** /'petrəs/ *adjective* like stone

**petrous bone** /'petrəs bæʊn/ *noun* the part of the temporal bone which forms the base of the skull and the inner and middle ears

**-pexy** /'peksɪ/ *suffix* referring to fixation of an organ by surgery

**Peyer's patches** /,paɪəz 'pætʃɪz/ *plural noun* patches of lymphoid tissue on the mucous membrane of the small intestine [Described 1677. After Johann Conrad Peyer (1653–1712), Swiss anatomist.]

**Peyronie's disease** /'perəni:z dɪ,zɪ:z/ *noun* a condition associated with Dupuytren's contracture in which hard fibre develops in the penis which becomes painful when erect [Described 1743. After François de la Peyronie (1678–1747), Surgeon to Louis XV in Paris, France.]

**PGD** /,pi: dʒi: 'di:/ *noun* a document that allows the supply of prescription-only drugs to a group of patients without individual prescriptions. Full form **patient-group direction**

**pH** /,pi: 'eɪtʃ/ *noun* the concentration of hydrogen ions in a solution, which determines its acidity

**phaco-** /fækəʊ/ *prefix* referring to the lens of the eye

**phacoemulsification** /,fækəʊɪ,mʌlsɪfɪ 'keɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* an ultrasonic technique which turns a cataract in the eye into liquid. It is then removed by suction and a plastic lens is put into the eye.

**phaeochromocytoma** /,fi:əʊ,krəʊməʊsai 'təʊmə/ *noun* a tumour of the adrenal glands which affects the secretion of hormones such as adrenaline, which in turn results in hypertension and hyperglycaemia

**phag-** /fæŋ/ *prefix* same as **phago-** (used before vowels)

**phage** /f'eɪdʒ/ *noun* same as **bacteriophage**

**-phage** /f'eɪdʒ/ *suffix* referring to something which eats

**-phagia** /f'eɪdʒə/ *suffix* referring to eating

**phago-** /fæŋəʊ/ *prefix* referring to eating

**phagocyte** /'fæŋəʊsaɪt/ *noun* a cell, especially a white blood cell, which can surround and destroy other cells such as bacteria cells

**phagocytic** /,fæŋə'sɪtɪk/ *adjective* referring to phagocytes ○ *Monocytes become phagocytic during infection.*

**phagocytosis** /,fæŋəʊsaɪ'təʊsɪs/ *noun* destruction of bacteria cells and foreign bodies by phagocytes

**phakic** /'fækɪk/ *adjective* referring to an eye which has its natural lens

**phako-** /fækəʊ/ *prefix* same as **phaco-**

**phalangeal** /fə'lændʒiəl/ *adjective* referring to the phalanges

**phalanges** /fə'lændʒɪz/ plural of **phalanx**

**phalanx** /'fælæŋks/ *noun* a bone in a finger or toe. See illustration at **HAND** in Supplement, **FOOT** in Supplement

**phalloplasty** /'fæləʊplæsti/ *noun* a surgical operation to repair a damaged or deformed penis

**phantom limb** /,fæntəm 'lɪm/ *noun* a condition in which someone seems to feel sensations in a limb which has been amputated

**phantom pregnancy** /,fæntəm 'pregnənsɪ/ *noun* same as **pseudocyesis**

**phantom tumour** /,fæntəm 'tju:məl/ *noun* a condition in which a swelling occurs which imitates a swelling caused by a tumour

**pharmaceutical** /,fɑ:mə'sju:tɪk(ə)/ *adjective* referring to pharmacy or drugs

**pharmaceuticals** /,fɑ:mə'sju:tɪk(ə)lz/ *plural noun* drugs prescribed as medicines

**Pharmaceutical Society** /,fɑ:mə'sju:tɪk(ə)l sə'saɪətɪ/ *noun* a professional association for pharmacists

**pharmacist** /'fɑ:məsɪst/ *noun* a trained person who is qualified to prepare medicines according to the instructions on a doctor's prescription

**pharmaco-** /fɑ:məkəʊ/ *prefix* referring to drugs

**pharmacodynamic** /,fɑ:məkəʊdaɪ'næmɪk/ *adjective* referring to a property of a drug which affects the part where it is applied

**pharmacodynamics** /,fɑ:məkəʊdaɪ'næmɪks/ *plural noun* the study of the effects of drugs on living organisms, and especially of how much the body's response changes when you increase the dose of a drug. Compare **pharmacokinetics** (NOTE: Takes a singular verb.)

**pharmacokinetic** /,fɑ:məkəʊkaɪ'netɪk/ *adjective* referring to a property of a drug which has an effect over a period of time

**pharmacokinetics** /,fɑ:məkəʊkaɪ'netɪks/ *plural noun* 1. the study of how the body reacts to drugs over a period of time. Compare **pharmacodynamics** (NOTE: Takes a singular verb.) 2. the way in which a drug interacts with the body

**pharmacological** /,fɑ:məkə'lɒdʒɪk(ə)/ *adjective* referring to pharmacology

**pharmacologist** /,fɑ:mə'kɒlədʒɪst/ *noun* a scientist who specialises in the study of drugs

**pharmacology** /,fɑ:mə'kɒlədʒɪ/ *noun* the study of drugs or medicines, and their actions, properties and characteristics

**pharmacopoeia** /,fɑ:məkə'pi:ə/ *noun* an official list of drugs, their methods of preparation, dosages and the ways in which they should be used

**pharmacy** /'fɑ:məsi/ *noun* 1. the study of the making and dispensing of drugs ○ *He has a qualification in pharmacy.* 2. a shop or department in a hospital where drugs are prepared

**Pharmacy Act** /'fɑ:məsi ækt/ *noun* in the UK, one of several Acts of Parliament which regulate the making, prescribing and selling of drugs, e.g. the Pharmacy and Poisons Act 1933, the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 and the Poisons Act 1972

**pharyng-** /fæɪrɪndʒ/ *prefix* same as **pharyngo-** (used before vowels)

**pharyngeal** /fæɪrɪn'dʒi:əl/ *adjective* referring to the pharynx

**pharyngeal pouch** /fæɪrɪndʒi:əl 'paʊtʃ/ *noun* one of the pouches on each side of the throat of an embryo. Also called **visceral pouch**

**pharyngeal tonsils** /fæɪrɪndʒi:əl 'tɒns(ə)lz/ *plural noun* same as **adenoids**



**pharyngectomy** /ˌfærɪnˈdʒektəmi/ *noun* the surgical removal of part of the pharynx, especially in cases of cancer of the pharynx

**pharyngismus** /ˌfærɪnˈdʒɪzməs/, **pharyngism** /ˌfærɪndʒɪz(ə)m/ *noun* a spasm which contracts the muscles of the pharynx

**pharyngitis** /ˌfærɪnˈdʒaɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the pharynx

**pharyngo-** /ˌfærɪŋəʊ/ *prefix* referring to the pharynx

**pharyngolaryngeal** /ˌfærɪŋgəʊləˈrɪndʒiəl/ *adjective* referring to the pharynx and the larynx

**pharyngoscope** /ˌfærɪŋgəʊskəʊp/ *noun* an instrument with a light attached, used by a doctor to examine the pharynx

**pharyngotympanic tube** /ˌfærɪŋgəʊtɪmˌpænik ˈtjuːb/ *noun* one of two tubes which connect the back of the throat to the middle ear. Also called **eustachian tube**

**pharynx** /ˈfærɪŋks/ *noun* a muscular passage leading from the back of the mouth to the oesophagus (NOTE: The plural is **pharynges** or **pharynxes**.)

**phenazopyridine** /ˌfæˌnæzəʊˈpɪrɪdɪn/ *noun* a drug used to reduce pain in conditions of the urinary tract, such as cystitis

**phenobarbitone** /ˌfiːnəʊˈbɑːbɪtəʊn/ *noun* a barbiturate drug which is used as a sedative, a hypnotic and an anticonvulsant

**phenol** /ˈfiːnɒl/ *noun* a strong disinfectant used for external use. Also called **carbolic acid**

**phenomenon** /ˌfæˈnɒmɪnən/ *noun* **1.** a fact or situation which can be observed **2.** someone or something that is considered to be extraordinary and marvellous

**phenotype** /ˈfiːnətaɪp/ *noun* the particular characteristics of an organism. Compare **genotype**

**phenylalanine** /ˌfiːnaɪˈæləniːn/ *noun* an essential amino acid

**phenylketonuria** /ˌfiːnaɪˌkiːtəʊˈnjuəriə/ *noun* a hereditary condition which affects the way in which the body breaks down phenylalanine, which in turn concentrates toxic metabolites in the nervous system causing brain damage

**phenytoin** /ˈfentɪɔɪn/ *noun* a drug which helps to prevent convulsions, used in the treatment of epilepsy

**phial** /ˈfaɪəl/ *noun* a small medicine bottle

**-philia** /ˈfɪliə/ *suffix* attraction to or liking for something

**philtrum** /ˈfɪltrəm/ *noun* a groove in the centre of the top lip

**phimosis** /ˈfaɪməʊsɪs/ *noun* a condition in which the foreskin is tight and has to be removed by circumcision

**phleb-** /ˈfleɪb/ *prefix* same as **phlebo-** (used before vowels)

**phlebectomy** /ˈflɪˈbektəmi/ *noun* the surgical removal of a vein or part of a vein

**phlebitis** /ˈflɪˈbaɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of a vein

**phlebo-** /ˈfleɪbəʊ/ *prefix* referring to a vein

**phlebogram** /ˈfleɪbəgræm/ *noun* an X-ray picture of a vein or system of veins. Also called **venogram**

**phlebography** /ˈflɪˈbɒgrəfi/ *noun* an X-ray examination of a vein using a radio-opaque dye so that the vein will show up on the film. Also called **venography**

**phlebolith** /ˈfleɪbəliθ/ *noun* a stone which forms in a vein as a result of an old thrombus becoming calcified

**phlebothrombosis** /ˌfleɪbəθrɒmˈbəʊsɪs/ *noun* a blood clot in a deep vein in the legs or pelvis, which can easily detach and form an embolus in a lung

**phlebotomy** /ˈflɪˈbɒtəmi/ *noun* an operation where a vein or an artery is cut so that blood can be removed, as when taking blood from a donor

**phlegm** /ˈflem/ *noun* same as **sputum** ○ *She was coughing up phlegm into her handkerchief.*

**phlegmasia alba dolens** /ˌflegˌmeɪziə ˌælbə ˈdɔʊləns/ *noun* same as **milk leg**

**phlyctena** /ˈflɪkˈtiːnə/, **phlycten** /ˈflɪktən/ *noun* **1.** a small blister caused by a burn **2.** a small vesicle on the conjunctiva

**phlyctenule** /ˈflɪkˈtenjuːl/ *noun* a tiny blister on the cornea or conjunctiva

**phobia** /ˈfəʊbiə/ *noun* an unusually strong and irrational fear ○ *She has a phobia about or of dogs.* ○ *Fear of snakes is one of the commonest phobias.*

**-phobia** /ˈfəʊbiə/ *suffix* neurotic fear of something ○ **agoraphobia** ○ **claustrophobia**

**phobic** /ˈfəʊbɪk/ *adjective* referring to a phobia

**-phobic** /ˈfəʊbɪk/ *suffix* a person who has a phobia of something

**phocomelia** /ˌfəʊkəˈmiːliə/, **phocomely** /ˌfəʊˈkɒməli/ *noun* a congenital condition in which the upper parts of the limbs are missing or poorly developed, leaving the hands or feet directly attached to the body

**phon-** /ˈfəʊn/ *prefix* same as **phono-** (used before vowels)

**phonation** /ˈfəʊˈneɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the production of vocal sounds, especially speech

**phoniatrics** /ˌfəʊniˈætrɪks/ *noun* the study of speech and disorders related to it

**phono-** /ˈfəʊnəʊ/ *prefix* referring to sound or voice

**phonocardiogram** /ˌfəʊnəʊˈkɑːdiəgræm/ *noun* a chart of the sounds made by the heart

**phonocardiography** /ˌfəʊnəʊˈkɑːdiˈɒgrəfi/ *noun* the process of recording the sounds made by the heart

**phonology** /fə'nɒlədʒi/ *noun* the study of the system of speech sounds used in a particular language or in human speech generally

**phonosurgery** /'fəʊnəʊ,sɜ:dʒəri/ *noun* surgery performed to alter the quality of the voice

**phosphatase** /'fɒsfəteɪz/ *noun* a group of enzymes which are important in the cycle of muscle contraction and in the calcification of bones

**phosphate** /'fɒsfəɪt/ *noun* a salt of phosphoric acid

**phosphaturia** /,fɒsfə'tʃʊəriə/ *noun* the presence of excess phosphates in the urine

**phospholipid** /,fɒsfəʊ'lipɪd/ *noun* a compound with fatty acids, which is one of the main components of membranous tissue

**phosphorescent** /,fɒsfə'res(ə)nt/ *adjective* shining without producing heat

**phosphoric acid** /fɒs,fɔrɪk 'æsɪd/ *noun* an acid which is very soluble in water and gives rise to acid, neutral and alkali salts

**phosphorus** /'fɒsf(ə)rəs/ *noun* a toxic chemical element which is present in very small quantities in bones and nerve tissue. It causes burns if it touches the skin, and can poison if swallowed. (NOTE: The chemical symbol is P)

**phosphorylase** /fɒs'fɔrɪleɪz/ *noun* an enzyme that aids the process of carbohydrate metabolism

**phot-** /fɒt, fəʊt/ *prefix* same as **photo-** (used before vowels)

**photalgia** /fəʊ'tældʒə/ *noun* pain in the eye caused by bright light

**photo-** /fəʊtəʊ/ *prefix* referring to light

**photoablation** /,fəʊtəʊ'bleɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the removal of tissue using lasers

**photocoagulation** /,fəʊtəʊkəʊ,ægjʊ 'leɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the process in which tissue coagulates from the heat caused by light, used to treat a detached retina

**photodermatitis** /,fəʊtəʊ,dɜ:mə'təʊsɪs/ *noun* a lesion of the skin after exposure to bright light

**photogenic** /,fəʊtə'dʒenɪk/ *adjective* 1. produced by the action of light 2. producing light

**photophobia** /,fəʊtəʊ'fəʊbiə/ *noun* a condition in which the eyes become sensitive to light and conjunctivitis may be caused (NOTE: It can be associated with measles and some other infectious diseases.)

**photophthalmia** /,fəʊtəʊ'θælmɪə/ *noun* inflammation of the eye caused by bright light, as in snow blindness

**photopic vision** /fəʊ,tɒpɪk 'vɪʒ(ə)n/ *noun* vision which is adapted to bright light such as daylight, using the cones in the retina instead of the rods, which are used in scotopic vision. ♪ **light adaptation**

**photopsia** /fəʊ'tɒpsɪə/ *noun* a condition of the eye in which someone sees flashes of light

**photoreceptor neurone** /,fəʊtəʊrɪ,septə 'nɜ:ʊərəʊn/ *noun* a rod or cone in the retina, which is sensitive to light or colour

**photoretinitis** /,fəʊtəreɪ'tɪnaɪtɪs/ *noun* damage to a retina caused by looking directly at the sun. Also called **sun blindness**

**photosensitive** /,fəʊtəʊ'sensɪtɪv/ *adjective* sensitive to light, or stimulated by light

**photosensitivity** /,fəʊtəʊsensɪ'tɪvɪti/ *noun* the fact of being sensitive to light

**phototherapy** /,fəʊtəʊ'θerəpi/ *noun* a treatment for jaundice and vitamin D deficiency, which involves exposing the person to ultraviolet rays

**phren-** /fren/ *prefix* same as **phreno-** (used before vowels)

**-phrenia** /fri:nɪə/ *suffix* disorder of the mind

**phrenic** /'frenɪk/ *adjective* referring to the diaphragm

**phrenic nerve** /'frenɪk nɜ:v/ *noun* a pair of nerves which controls the muscles in the diaphragm

**phreno-** /frenəʊ/ *prefix* 1. referring to the brain 2. referring to the phrenic nerve

**pH test** /,pi: 'eɪtʃ test/ *noun* a test to see how acid or alkaline a solution is

**phthiriasis** /θɪ'taɪrɪəsɪs/ *noun* infestation with the crab louse

**Phthirus pubis** /θaɪrɪəs 'pju:bɪs/ *noun* a louse which infests the pubic region. Also called **pubic louse, crab**

**physi-** /fɪzi/ *prefix* same as **physio-** (used before vowels)

**physical** /'fɪzɪk(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to the body, as opposed to the mind ■ *noun* a physical examination ○ *He has to pass a physical before being accepted by the police force.*

**physical drug dependence** /,fɪzɪk(ə)l 'drʌg dɪ'pendəns/ *noun* a state where a person is addicted to a drug such as heroin and suffers physical effects if he or she stops or reduces the drug

**physical education** /,fɪzɪk(ə)l 'edʒʊ 'keɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the teaching of sports and exercises in school

**physical examination** /,fɪzɪk(ə)l ɪg,zæmɪ 'neɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* an examination of someone's body to see if he or she is healthy

**physical genetic trait** /,fɪzɪk(ə)l dʒə'netɪk treɪt/ *noun* a characteristic of the body of a person, e.g. red hair or big feet, which is inherited

**physical medicine** /,fɪzɪk(ə)l 'med(ə)sɪn/ *noun* a branch of medicine which deals with physical disabilities or with treatment of disorders after they have been diagnosed

**physical sign** /fɪzɪk(ə)l 'saɪn/ *noun* a symptom which can be seen on someone's body or which can be produced by percussion and palpitation

**physical therapy** /fɪzɪk(ə)l 'θerəpi/ *noun* the treatment of disorders by heat, by massage, by exercise and other physical means

**physician** /fɪ'zɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a registered doctor who is not a surgeon

**physio** /'fɪziəʊ/ *noun (informal)* **1.** a session of physiotherapy treatment **2.** a physiotherapist

**physio-** /fɪziəʊ/ *prefix* **1.** referring to physiology **2.** physical

**physiological** /fɪziə'lɒdʒɪk(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to physiology and the regular functions of the body

**physiological saline** /fɪziə'lɒdʒɪk(ə)l 'seɪlɪn/, **physiological solution** /fɪziə'lɒdʒɪk(ə)l sə'lju:ʃ(ə)n/ *noun* any solution used to keep cells or tissue alive

**physiological tremor** /fɪziə'lɒdʒɪk(ə)l 'tremə/ *noun* a small movement of the limbs which takes place when a person tries to remain still

**physiologist** /fɪzi'nɒlədʒɪst/ *noun* a scientist who specialises in the study of the functions of living organisms

**physiology** /fɪzi'nɒlədʒi/ *noun* the study of regular body functions

**physiotherapist** /fɪziəʊ'θerəpɪst/ *noun* a trained specialist who gives physiotherapy

**physiotherapy** /fɪziəʊ'θerəpi/ *noun* the treatment of a disorder or condition by exercise, massage, heat treatment, infrared lamps or other external means, e.g. to restore strength or function after a disease or injury

**physiotherapy clinic** /fɪziəʊ'θerəpi ,kɪnɪk/ *noun* a clinic where people can have physiotherapy

**physique** /fɪ'zi:k/ *noun* the shape and size of a person's body

**physo-** /fɪsəʊ/ *prefix* **1.** tending to swell **2.** relating to air or gas

**phyt-** /faɪt/, **phyto-** /faɪtəʊ/ *prefix* referring to plants or coming from plants

**PI** *abbreviation* pressure index

**pia** /'paɪə/, **pia mater** /paɪə 'meɪtə/ *noun* the delicate innermost membrane of the three which cover the brain. † **arachnoid, dura mater**

**pica** /'paɪkə/ *noun* a desire to eat things which are not food, e.g. wood or paper, often found in pregnant women and small children

**Pick's disease** /'pɪks dɪ'zi:z/ *noun* a rare form of presenile dementia, in which a disorder of the lipid metabolism causes mental impairment, anaemia, loss of weight and swelling of the spleen and liver

**pico-** /pi:kəʊ/ *prefix* one million millionth (10<sup>12</sup>). Symbol **p**

**pico-mole** /'pi:kəʊməʊl/ *noun* a unit of measurement of the amount of substance equal to one million millionth of a mole. Symbol **pmol**

**Pierre Robin syndrome** /,pjɛə rɒ'bæn ,sɪndrəʊm/ *noun* a combination of facial features including a small lower jaw and a cleft palate that exist at birth, causing breathing and feeding problems early in a child's life

**pigeon breast** /'pɪdʒɪn brest/, **pigeon chest** /'pɪdʒən tʃest/ *noun* same as **pectus carinatum**

**pigeon toes** /'pɪdʒən təʊz/ *plural noun* a condition in which the feet turn towards the inside when a person is standing upright

**pigment** /'pɪgmənt/ *noun* a substance which gives colour to part of the body such as blood, the skin or hair

**pigmentation** /,pɪgmənt'eɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the colouring of the body, especially that produced by deposits of pigment

**PIH** *abbreviation* pregnancy-induced hypertension

**piles** /paɪlz/ *plural noun* same as **haemorrhoids**

**pili** /'paɪlə/ † **arrector pili**

**pill** /pɪl/ *noun* a small hard round ball of medication that is taken by swallowing ○ *He has to take the pills twice a day.* □ **the pill** an oral contraceptive. † **morning-after pill** □ **on the pill** taking a regular course of contraceptive pills

**pillar** /'pɪlə/ *noun* a part that is long and thin

**pilo-** /paɪləʊ/ *prefix* referring to hair

**pilocarpine** /,paɪləʊ'kɑ:pi:n/ *noun* an organic compound of plant origin which is used in eye drops to treat glaucoma

**pilomotor** /,paɪləʊ'məʊtə/ *adjective* referring to something that moves the hairs of the skin

**pilomotor nerve** /,paɪləʊ'məʊtə ,nɜ:vl/ *noun* a nerve which supplies the arrector pili muscles attached to hair follicles

**pilomotor reflex** /,paɪləʊ'məʊtə ,rɪfleks/ *noun* a reaction of the dermal papillae of the skin to cold and fear which causes the hairs on the skin to become erect

**pilonidal** /,paɪlə'naɪd(ə)l/ *adjective* relating to a cyst or cavity which has a growth of hair

**pilonidal cyst** /,paɪlənaɪd(ə)l 'sɪst/ *noun* a cyst containing hair, usually found at the bottom of the spine near the buttocks

**pilonidal sinus** /,paɪlənaɪd(ə)l 'sɪnəs/ *noun* a small depression with hairs at the base of the spine

**pilosis** /paɪ'ləʊsɪs/, **pilosism** /'paɪləsɪz(ə)m/ *noun* a condition in which someone has an unusual amount of hair or where hair is present in an unusual place

**pilot study** /'paɪlət ,stʌdi/ *noun* a small version of a project which is carried out first, in order

to discover how well it works and to solve any problems, before going ahead with the full version

**pilus** /'paɪləs/ *noun* one hair (NOTE: The plural is **pili**.)

**pimple** /'pɪmpəl/ *noun* a small swelling on the skin, containing pus ○ *He had pimples on his neck.*

**pineal** /'pi:niəl/ *adjective* relating to or released by the pineal gland

**pineal body** /'pi:niəl ˌbɒdi/, **pineal gland** /'pi:niəl glænd/ *noun* a small cone-shaped gland situated below the corpus callosum in the brain, which produces melatonin and is believed to be associated with the circadian rhythm. See illustration at **BRAIN** in Supplement

**pinguecula** /pɪŋ'gwekjələ/, **pinguicula** /pɪŋ'gwɪkjələ/ *noun* a condition affecting elderly people, in which the conjunctiva in the eyes has small yellow growths near the edge of the cornea, usually on the nasal side

**pinna** /'pi:nə/ *noun* the outer ear, the part of the ear which is outside the head, connected by a passage to the eardrum. See illustration at **EAR** in Supplement

**pinnaplasty** /'pɪnəplæsti/ *noun* a cosmetic surgical procedure to correct the shape of the ear

**pinocytosis** /ˌpi:nəʊsaɪ'təʊsɪs/ *noun* the process by which a cell surrounds and takes in fluid

**pins and needles** /ˌpɪnz ən 'ni:d(ə)lz/ *noun* an unpleasant tingling sensation, usually occurring after a temporarily restricted blood supply returns to an arm or leg (*informal*) ◊ **paraesthesia**

**PIP** *abbreviation* proximal interphalangeal joint

**piriform fossae** /ˌpɪrɪfɔ:m 'fɔ:si:/ *plural noun* the two hollows at the sides of the upper end of the larynx

**Piriton** /'pɪrɪtɒn/ a trade name for chlorpheniramine

**piroxicam** /pɪ'rɒksɪkæm/ *noun* a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug used in the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis and osteoarthritis

**PIs** *abbreviation* performance indicators

**pisiform** /'pɪsɪfɔ:m/, **pisiform bone** /'pɪsɪfɔ:m bəʊn/ *noun* one of the eight small carpal bones in the wrist. See illustration at **HAND** in Supplement

**pit** /pɪt/ *noun* a hollow place on a surface

**pitting** /'pɪtɪŋ/ *noun* the formation of hollows in the skin

**pituitary** /pɪ'tju:ɪt(ə)ri/ *adjective* **1.** relating to or produced by the pituitary gland **2.** caused by a disturbance of the pituitary gland ■ *noun* same as **pituitary gland**

**pituitary body** /pɪ'tju:ɪt(ə)ri ˌbɒdi/ *noun* same as **pituitary gland**

**pituitary fossa** /pɪ'tju:ɪt(ə)ri 'fɔ:sə/ *noun* same as **sella turcica**

**pituitary gland** /pɪ'tju:ɪt(ə)ri glænd/ *noun* the main endocrine gland in the body which secretes hormones that stimulate other glands. Also called **pituitary body**, **hypophysis cerebri**. See illustration at **BRAIN** in Supplement

COMMENT: The pituitary gland is about the size of a pea and hangs down from the base of the brain, inside the sphenoid bone, on a stalk which attaches it to the hypothalamus. The front lobe of the gland (the adenohypophysis) secretes several hormones (TSH, ACTH) which stimulate the adrenal and thyroid glands, or which stimulate the production of sex hormones, melanin and milk. The posterior lobe of the pituitary gland (the neurohypophysis) secretes the antidiuretic hormone (ADH) and oxytocin.

**pituitrin** /pɪ'tju:ɪtrɪn/ *noun* a hormone secreted by the pituitary gland

**pityriasis** /ˌpɪtɪ'raɪəsɪs/ *noun* any skin disease in which the skin develops thin scales

**pityriasis alba** /pɪtɪ,raɪəsɪs 'ælbə/ *noun* a disease affecting children which results in flat white patches on the cheeks that usually heal naturally

**pityriasis capitis** /pɪtɪ,raɪəsɪs kə'pæɪtɪs/ *noun* ◊ **dandruff**

**pityriasis rosea** /pɪtɪ,raɪəsɪs 'rəʊziəl/ *noun* a mild irritating rash affecting young people, which appears especially in the early part of the year and has no known cause

**pityriasis rubra** /pɪtɪ,raɪəsɪs 'ru:brə/ *noun* a serious, sometimes fatal, skin disease, a type of exfoliative dermatitis in which the skin turns dark red and is covered with white scales

**pivot** /'pɪvət/ *noun* a stem used to attach an artificial crown to the root of a tooth ■ *verb* to rest and turn on a point ○ *The atlas bone pivots on the second vertebra.*

**pivot joint** /'pɪvət dʒɔɪnt/ *noun* same as **trochoid joint**

**PKD** *abbreviation* polycystic kidney disease

**PKU** *abbreviation* phenylketonuria

**placebo** /plə'si:bəʊ/ *noun* a tablet which appears to be a drug, but has no medicinal substance in it

**placebo effect** /plə'si:bəʊ ɪˌfekt/ *noun* the apparently beneficial effect of telling someone that he or she is having a treatment, even if this is not true, caused by the hope that the treatment will be effective

**placenta** /plə'sentə/ *noun* the tissue which grows inside the uterus during pregnancy and links the baby to the mother

**placental** /plə'sent(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to the placenta

**placental barrier** /plə'sent(ə)l 'bæriəl/ *noun* a barrier which prevents the blood of a fetus and

that of the mother from mixing, but allows water, oxygen and hormones to pass from mother to fetus

**placental insufficiency** /plə'sent(ə)l ɪnsə'fɪ(ə)nsi/ *noun* a condition in which the placenta does not provide the fetus with the necessary oxygen and nutrients

**placenta praevia** /plə'sentə 'pri:vɪə/ *noun* a condition in which the fertilised egg becomes implanted in the lower part of the uterus, which means that the placenta lies across the cervix and may become detached during childbirth and cause brain damage to the baby

**plagiocephaly** /,pleɪdʒi'əkefəli/ *noun* a condition in which a person has a distorted head shape, from irregular closure of the cranial sutures

**plague** /pleɪg/ *noun* an infectious disease which occurs in epidemics where many people are killed

**plane** /pleɪn/ *noun* a flat surface, especially that of the body seen from a specific angle

**planning** /'plænɪŋ/ *noun* the work of deciding and arranging how something should be done

**planta** /'plæntə/ *noun* the sole of the foot

**plantar** /'plæntəl/ *adjective* referring to the sole of the foot

**plantar arch** /,plæntər 'ɑ:tʃ/ *noun* the curved part of the sole of the foot running along the length of the foot. Also called **longitudinal arch**

**plantar flexion** /,plæntə 'fleksjən/ *noun* the bending of the toes downwards

**plantar reflex** /,plæntə 'ri:fleks/, **plantar response** /,plæntə rɪ'spɒns/ *noun* the usual downward movement of the toes when the sole of the foot is stroked in the Babinski test

**plantar region** /'plæntə ,ri:dʒən/ *noun* the sole of the foot

**plantar surface** /'plæntə ,sɜ:fɪs/ *noun* the skin of the sole of the foot

**planus** /'pleɪnəs/ ♦ **lichen planus**

**plaque** /plæk, plɑ:k/ *noun* **1.** a flat area **2.** a film of saliva, mucus, bacteria and food residues that builds up on the surface of teeth and can cause gum damage

**-plasia** /pleɪziə/ *suffix* referring to something which develops or grows

**plasm-** /plæz(ə)m/ *prefix* same as **plasm-** (used before vowels)

**plasma** /'plæzmə/ *noun* a yellow watery liquid which makes up the main part of blood

**plasma cell** /'plæzmə seɪl/ *noun* a lymphocyte which produces a particular type of antibody

**plasmapheresis** /,plæzməfə'ri:sɪs/ *noun* an operation to take blood from someone, then to separate the red blood cells from the plasma, and to return the red blood cells suspended in a saline solution to the patient through a transfusion

**plasma protein** /'plæzmə ,prəʊti:n/ *noun* a protein in plasma, e.g. albumin, gamma globulin or fibrinogen

**plasmin** /'plæzmɪn/ *noun* same as **fibrinolysin**

**plasminogen** /plæz'mɪnədʒən/ *noun* a substance in blood plasma which becomes activated and forms plasmin

**plasm-** /plæzməʊ/ *prefix* referring to blood plasma

**Plasmodium** /plæz'məʊdiəm/ *noun* a type of parasite which infests red blood cells and causes malaria

**plaster** /'plɑ:stəl/ *noun* a white powder which is mixed with water and used to make a solid support to cover a broken limb ○ *After his accident he had his leg in plaster for two months.*

**plaster cast** /'plɑ:stə kɑ:st/ *noun* a hard support made of bandage soaked in liquid plaster of Paris, which is allowed to harden after being wrapped round a broken limb and which prevents the limb moving while the bone heals

**plaster of Paris** /,plɑ:stər əv 'pærɪs/ *noun* a fine white plaster used to make plaster casts

**plastic** /'plæstɪk/ *noun* an artificial material made from petroleum, and used to make many objects, including replacement organs ■ *adjective* able to change shape or develop in different shapes

**plastic lymph** /'plæstɪk lɪmf/ *noun* a yellow liquid produced by an inflamed wound which helps the healing process

**plastic surgeon** /,plæstɪk 'sɜ:dʒən/ *noun* a surgeon who specialises in plastic surgery

**plastic surgery** /,plæstɪk 'sɜ:dʒəri/ *noun* surgery to repair damaged or malformed parts of the body (*informal*)

COMMENT: Plastic surgery is especially important in treating accident victims or people who have suffered burns. It is also used to correct congenital disorders such as a cleft palate. When the aim is simply to improve the patient's appearance, it is usually referred to as 'cosmetic surgery'.

**plastin** /'plæstɪn/ *noun* same as **fibrinolysin**

**-plasty** /plæsti/ *suffix* referring to plastic surgery

**plate** /pleɪt/ *noun* a flat sheet of metal or bone ○ *The surgeon inserted a plate in her skull.*

**platelet** /'pleɪtlət/ *noun* a small blood cell which releases thromboplastin and which multiplies rapidly after an injury, encouraging the coagulation of blood. Also called **thrombocyte**

**platelet count** /'pleɪtlət kaʊnt/ *noun* a test to count the number of platelets in a specific quantity of blood

**platy-** /plæti/ *prefix* flat

**pledget** /'pledʒɪt/ *noun* a small piece of gauze or cotton wool used to protect or apply medica-

tion to a small enclosed space, such as the ear passage

**-plegia** /pli:dʒə/ *suffix* paralysis

**pleio-** /plaiəʊ/ *prefix* same as **pleo-**

**pleo-** /pli:əʊ/ *prefix* too many

**pleocytosis** /,pli:əsəsaɪ'təʊsɪs/ *noun* a condition in which there are an unusual number of leucocytes in the cerebrospinal fluid

**pleoptics** /pli:'ɒptɪks/ *noun* treatment to help the partially sighted

**pleissor** /'plesə/ *noun* a little hammer with a rubber tip, used by doctors to tap tendons to test for reflexes or for percussion of the chest. Also called **plexor**

**plethysmography** /,pleθɪz'mɒgrəfi/ *noun* a method of recording changes in the volume of organs, mainly used to measure blood flow in the limbs

**pleur-** /pluər/ *prefix* same as **pleuro-** (used before vowels)

**pleura** /'pluərə/ *noun* one of two membranes lining the chest cavity and covering each lung (NOTE: The plural is **pleuras** or **pleurae**.)

**pleuracentesis** /,pluərəsen'ti:sis/ *noun* same as **pleurocentesis**

**pleural** /'pluərə/ *adjective* referring to the pleura

**pleural cavity** /,pluərə 'kævɪti/ *noun* a space between the inner and outer pleura of the chest. See illustration at **LUNGS** in Supplement

**pleural effusion** /,pluərə ɪ'fju:ʒ(ə)n/ *noun* an excess of fluid formed in the pleural sac

**pleural fluid** /,pluərə 'flu:ɪd/ *noun* a fluid which forms between the layers of the pleura in pleurisy

**pleural membrane** /,pluərə 'membreɪn/ *noun* same as **pleura**

**pleurectomy** /pluə'rektəmi/ *noun* the surgical removal of part of the pleura which has been thickened or made stiff by chronic empyema

**pleurisy** /'pluərəsi/ *noun* inflammation of the pleura, usually caused by pneumonia

**pleuritis** /pluə'reɪtɪs/ *noun* same as **pleurisy**

**pleuro-** /pluərəʊ/ *prefix* referring to the pleura

**pleurocentesis** /,pluərəusen'ti:sis/ *noun* an operation in which a hollow needle is put into the pleura to drain liquid. Also called **pleura-centesis**

**pleurodesis** /,pluərəʊ'di:sis/ *noun* treatment for a collapsed lung, in which the inner and outer pleura are stuck together

**pleurodynia** /,pluərəʊ'dɪniə/ *noun* pain in the muscles between the ribs, due to rheumatic inflammation

**pleuropneumonia** /,pluərəʊnju'məniə/ *noun* acute lobar pneumonia, the classic type of pneumonia

**plexor** /'pleksə/ *noun* same as **pleissor**

**plexus** /'pleksəs/ *noun* a network of nerves, blood vessels or lymphatics

**plica** /'plɪkə/ *noun* a fold

**plicate** /'plɪkeɪt/ *adjective* folded

**plication** /plɑr'keɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a surgical operation to reduce the size of a muscle or a hollow organ by making folds in its walls and attaching them

**ploidy** /'plɔɪdi/ *noun* the number of sets of chromosomes within a cell

**plumbing** /'plʌmɪŋ/ *noun* any system of tubes or vessels in the body, but especially the urinary system (*informal humorous*)

**Plummer–Vinson syndrome** /,plʌmə 'vɪnsən ˌsɪndrəʊm/ *noun* a type of iron-deficiency anaemia, in which the tongue and mouth become inflamed and the person cannot swallow [Described 1912 by Plummer, 1919 by Vinson (also described in 1919 by Patterson and Brown Kelly, whose names are frequently associated with the syndrome). Henry Stanley Plummer (1874–1937), US physician; Porter Paisley Vinson (1890–1959), physician at the Mayo Clinic, Minnesota, USA.]

**pluri-** /pluəri/ *prefix* indicating more than one of something

**PM** *abbreviation* post mortem

**PMA** *abbreviation* progressive muscular atrophy

**pmol** *symbol* picomole

**PMR** *abbreviation* polymyalgia rheumatica

**PMS** *abbreviation* premenstrual syndrome

**PMT** *abbreviation* premenstrual tension

**-pnea** /pni:ə/ *suffix* same as **-pnoea**

**pneo-** /ni:əʊ/ *prefix* relating to breathing

**pneum-** /nju:m/ *prefix* same as **pneumo-** (used before vowels)

**pneumat-** /nju:mət/ *prefix* same as **pneumato-** (used before vowels)

**pneumato-** /nju:mətəʊ/ *prefix* relating to air, gas or breath

**pneumatocele** /nju:'mætəʊsi:l/ *noun* a sac or tumour filled with gas

**pneumatometer** /,nju:mətə'nɒmɪtə/ *noun* an instrument which measures the air pressure in the eye, used in testing for glaucoma. It blows a puff of air onto the cornea.

**pneumatosis** /,nju:mətə'sɪsɪs/ *noun* the occurrence of gas in an unusual place in the body

**pneumaturia** /,nju:mət'juəriə/ *noun* the act of passing air or gas in the urine

**pneumo-** /nju:məʊ/ *prefix* referring to air, to the lungs or to breathing

**pneumococcal** /,nju:məʊ'kɒk(ə)/ *adjective* referring to pneumococci

**pneumococcus** /,nju:məʊ'kɒkəs/ *noun* a bacterium which causes respiratory tract infec-

tions including pneumonia (NOTE: The plural is **pneumococci**.)

**pneumoconiosis** /,nju:məʊkəʊni'əʊsɪs/ *noun* a lung disease in which fibrous tissue forms in the lungs because the person has inhaled particles of stone or dust over a long period of time

**pneumocystis carinii pneumonia** /,nju:məʊsɪstɪs kə,rɪ:nii nju:məʊniə/ *noun* a form of pneumonia found in people with impaired immune systems after radiotherapy or with AIDS. Abbreviation **PCP**

**pneumocyte** /'nju:məʊsaɪt/ *noun* a cell of the walls between the air sacs in the lung

**pneumoencephalography** /,nju:məʊen'kefə'lɒgrəfi/ *noun* same as **encephalogram**

**pneumogastric** /,nju:məʊ'gæstrɪk/ *adjective* referring to the lungs and the stomach

**pneumograph** /'nju:məgrə:f/ *noun* an instrument which records chest movements during breathing

**pneumohaemothorax** /,nju:məʊ,hi:məʊ'θɔ:ræks/ *noun* blood or air in the pleural cavity. Also called **haemopneumothorax**

**pneumomycosis** /,nju:məʊmaɪ'kəʊsɪs/ *noun* an infection of the lungs caused by a fungus

**pneumon-** /nju:mən/ *prefix* same as **pneumono-** (used before vowels)

**pneumectomy** /,nju:mə'nektəmi/ *noun* the surgical removal of all or part of a lung. Also called **pulmonectomy**

**pneumonia** /nju:məʊniə/ *noun* inflammation of a lung, where the tiny alveoli of the lung become filled with fluid ○ *He developed pneumonia and had to be hospitalised.* ○ *She died of pneumonia.*

**pneumonitis** /,nju:məʊ'naitɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the lungs

**pneumono-** /nju:mənəʊ/ *prefix* referring to the lungs

**pneumoperitoneum** /,nju:məʊperɪtə'ni:əm/ *noun* air in the peritoneal cavity

**pneumoradiography** /,nju:məʊ'reɪdɪ'bɔgrəfi/ *noun* an X-ray examination of part of the body after air or a gas has been inserted to make the organs show more clearly

**pneumothorax** /,nju:məʊ'θɔ:ræks/ *noun* a condition in which air or gas is in the thorax. Also called **collapsed lung**

**-pnoea** /pni:ə/ *suffix* referring to breathing

**PNS** *abbreviation* peripheral nervous system

**pock** /pɒk/ *noun* a localised lesion on the skin, due to smallpox or chickenpox

**pod-** /pɒd/ *prefix* referring to the foot

**podagra** /pɒ'dægrə/ same as **gout**

**podalic** /pɒd'dæɪk/ *adjective* relating to the feet

**podalic version** /pɒs,dæɪk 'vɜ:f(ə)n/ *noun* the procedure of turning a fetus in the uterus by its feet

**podarthrits** /,pɒdɑ:t'θɑ:ɪtɪs/ *noun* the swelling of one or more joints of the foot

**podiatrist** /pɒs'daɪətɪst/ *noun* **US** a person who specialises in the care of the foot and its diseases

**podiatry** /pɒs'daɪətɪ/ *noun* **US** the study of minor diseases and disorders of the feet

**-poiesis** /pɔi:ɪsɪs/ *suffix* referring to something which forms

**poikilo-** /pɔɪkɪləʊ/ *prefix* irregular or varied

**poison** /'pɔɪz(ə)n/ *noun* a substance which can kill or harm body tissues if eaten or drunk ■ *verb* to harm or kill someone with a poison

**poisoning** /'pɔɪz(ə)nɪŋ/ *noun* a condition in which a person is made ill or is killed by a poisonous substance

**poison ivy** /,pɔɪz(ə)n 'aɪvi/, **poison oak** /,pɔɪz(ə)n 'əʊk/ *noun* American plants whose leaves can cause a painful rash if touched

**Poisons Act** /'pɔɪz(ə)nz ækt/ *noun* in the UK, one of several Acts of Parliament which regulate the making, prescribing and selling of drugs, e.g. the Pharmacy and Poisons Act 1933, Misuse of Drugs Act 1971, or Poisons Act 1972

**polar** /'pəʊlə/ *adjective* with a pole

**polar body** /,pəʊlə 'bɒdi/ *noun* a small cell which is produced from an oocyte but does not develop into an ovum

**pole** /pəʊl/ *noun* the end of an axis

**poli-** /pɒli/ *prefix* same as **polio-** (used before vowels)

**polio** /'pəʊliəʊ/ *noun* same as **poliomyelitis** (informal)

**polio-** /pəʊliəʊ/ *prefix* grey matter in the nervous system

**polioencephalitis** /,pəʊliəʊen,kefə'laitɪs/ *noun* a type of viral encephalitis, an inflammation of the grey matter in the brain caused by the same virus as poliomyelitis

**polioencephalomyelitis** /,pəʊliəʊen,kefə'ləʊ,maɪə'laitɪs/ *noun* polioencephalitis which also affects the spinal cord

**poliomyelitis** /,pəʊliəʊ,maɪə'laitɪs/ *noun* an infection of the anterior horn cells of the spinal cord caused by a virus which attacks the motor neurones and can lead to paralysis. Also called **polio, infantile paralysis**

**poliovirus** /'pəʊliəʊ,vaiərəs/ *noun* a virus which causes poliomyelitis

**Politzer bag** /'pɒlɪtsə bæɡ/ *noun* a rubber bag which is used to blow air into the middle ear to unblock a Eustachian tube [Described 1863. After Adam Politzer (1835–1920), Professor of Otolaryngology in Vienna, Austria.]

**pollex** /'pɒleks/ *noun* the thumb (*technical*) (NOTE: The plural is **pollices**.)

**pollution** /pə'lu:ʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the act of making dirty, or substances which make e.g. air or water impure

**poly-** /pɒli/ *prefix* **1.** many or much **2.** touching many organs

**polyarteritis** /,pɒliɑ:tə'rɑ:rtɪs/ *noun* a condition in which a lot of arteries swell up at the same time

**polyarteritis nodosa** /,pɒliɑ:tə'rɑ:rtɪs nə'dəʊsə/ *noun* a collagen disease in which the walls of the arteries in various parts of the body become inflamed, leading to asthma, high blood pressure and kidney failure. Also called **periarteritis nodosa**

**polyarthritis** /,pɒliɑ:'θrɑ:rtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of several joints, as in rheumatoid arthritis

**polycystic** /,pɒli'sɪstɪk/ *adjective* referring to an organ which has developed more than one cyst, or to a disease caused by the development of cysts

**polycystic kidney disease** /,pɒlɪsɪstɪk'kɪdnɪ dɪ,zɪ:z/ *noun* a condition in which there are multiple cysts on each kidney which grow and multiply over time. Abbreviation **PKD**

COMMENT: The diseased kidney finally shuts down in over 60% of cases, and dialysis and transplantation are the only forms of treatment.

**polycystic ovary disease** /,pɒlɪsɪstɪk'əʊvəri dɪ,zɪ:z/ *noun* same as **polycystic ovary syndrome**. Abbreviation **PCOD**

**polycystic ovary syndrome** /,pɒlɪsɪstɪk'əʊvəri ,sɪndrəʊm/, **polycystic ovarian syndrome** /,pɒlɪsɪstɪk'əʊ'veəriən ,sɪndrəʊm/ *noun* a hormonal disorder in which a woman's ovaries are enlarged and contain many small painless cysts, hair growth is excessive, acne develops and infertility may occur. Also called **Stein Leventhal syndrome**. Abbreviation **PCOS**

**polycystitis** /,pɒlɪsɪ'staɪtɪs/ *noun* a congenital disease in which several cysts form in the kidney at the same time

**polycythaemia** /,pɒlɪsɑ:'θi:miə/ *noun* a condition in which the number of red blood cells increases (NOTE: The US spelling is **polycythemia**.)

**polydactylism** /,pɒli'dæktɪlɪz(ə)m/ *noun* same as **hyperdactylism**

**polydipsia** /,pɒli'dɪpsɪə/ *noun* a condition, often caused by diabetes insipidus, in which a person is unusually thirsty

**polymyalgia rheumatica** /,pɒlɪmaɪ,ældʒəru:'mæɪtɪkə/ *noun* a disease of elderly people characterised by pain and stiffness in the shoulder and hip muscles making them weak and sensitive

**polymyositis** /,pɒlɪmaɪəu'saɪtɪs/ *noun* a condition in which a lot of muscles swell up at the same time, especially the ones in the trunk of the

body, causing weakness. It is treated with steroid drugs or immunosuppressants, and also exercise.

**polyneuritis** /,pɒlɪnju'rɑ:rtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of many nerves

**polyneuropathy** /,pɒlɪnju'rɒpəθi/ *noun* any disease which affects several nerves (NOTE: The plural is **polyneuropathies**.)

**polyopia** /,pɒli'əʊpiə/, **polyopsia** /,pɒli'ɒpsɪə/, **polyopy** /'pɒliəʊpi/ *noun* a condition in which a person sees several images of one object at the same time. Compare **diplopia**

**polyp** /'pɒlɪp/ *noun* a tumour growing on a stalk in mucous membrane, which can be cauterised. Polyps are often found in the nose, mouth or throat. Also called **polypus**

**polypectomy** /,pɒli'pektəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to remove a polyp (NOTE: The plural is **polypectomies**.)

**polypeptide** /,pɒli'peptɑɪd/ *noun* a type of protein formed of linked amino acids

**polypi** /'pɒlɪpi/ plural of **polypus**

**polyploid** /'pɒlɪplɔɪd/ *adjective* referring to a cell where there are more than two copies of each chromosome, which is not viable in humans

**polypoid** /'pɒlɪpɔɪd/ *adjective* looking like a polyp

**polyposis** /,pɒli'pəʊsɪs/ *noun* a condition in which many polyps form in the mucous membrane of the colon. † **familial adenomatous polyposis**

**polypus** /'pɒlɪpəs/ *noun* same as **polyp** (NOTE: The plural is **polypi**.)

**polysaccharide** /,pɒli'sækəraɪd/ *noun* a type of carbohydrate made up of a lot of monosaccharides joined together in chains. They include starch and cellulose, are insoluble in water and do not form crystals.

**polysomnograph** /,pɒli'sɒmnəgrɑ:f/ *noun* a record of bodily activity during sleep to identify possible causes of sleep disorders

**polyspermia** /,pɒli'spɜ:miə/, **polyspermism** /,pɒli'spɜ:mɪz(ə)m/, **polyspermy** /,pɒli'spɜ:mi/ *noun* excessive seminal secretion

**polyuria** /,pɒli'juəriə/ *noun* a condition in which a person passes a large quantity of urine, usually as a result of diabetes insipidus

**pompholyx** /'pɒmfɒlɪks/ *noun* a type of eczema with many irritating little blisters on the hands and feet

**pons** /pɒnz/ *noun* a bridge of tissue joining parts of an organ. See illustration at **BRAIN** in Supplement (NOTE: The plural is **pontes**.)

**pons Varolii** /,pɒnz və'rəʊliə/ *noun* part of the hindbrain, formed of fibres which continue the medulla oblongata. See illustration at **BRAIN** in Supplement (NOTE: The plural is **pontes Varolii**.) [After Constanzo Varolius (1543–75),



Italian physician and anatomist, doctor to Pope Gregory XIII.]

**pontine** /'pɒntaɪn/ *adjective* referring to a pons

**POP** /pɒp/ *abbreviation* progesterone only pill

**popliteal** /,pɒplɪ'ti:əl/ *adjective* referring to the back of the knee

**popliteal artery** /,pɒplɪti:əl 'ɑ:təri/ *noun* an artery which branches from the femoral artery behind the knee and leads into the tibial arteries

**popliteal fossa** /,pɒplɪti:əl 'fɒsə/ *noun* a space behind the knee between the hamstring and the calf muscle. Also called **popliteal space**

**popliteal muscle** /,pɒplɪ'ti:əl ,mʌs(ə)l/ *noun* same as **popliteus**

**popliteal space** /,pɒplɪti:əl 'speɪs/ *noun* same as **popliteal fossa**

**popliteus** /pɒ'plɪtiəs/ *noun* a muscle at the back of the knee. Also called **popliteal muscle**

**population** /,pɒpjʊ'leɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* **1.** the number of people living in a country or town ○ *Population statistics show that the birth rate is slowing down.* ○ *The government has decided to screen the whole population of the area.* **2.** the number of patients in hospital ○ *The hospital population in the area has fallen below 10,000.*

**pore** /pɔː/ *noun* a tiny hole in the skin through which the sweat passes

**porphyria** /pɔ:'fɪriə/ *noun* a hereditary disease affecting the metabolism of porphyrin pigments

COMMENT: Porphyria causes abdominal pains and attacks of mental confusion. The skin becomes sensitive to light and the urine becomes coloured and turns dark brown when exposed to the light.

**porphyrin** /'pɔ:fəɪn/ *noun* a member of a family of metal-containing biological pigments, the commonest of which is protoporphyrin IX

**porphyrinuria** /,pɔ:fɪrɪ'njʊəriə/ *noun* the presence of excess porphyrins in the urine, a sign of porphyria or of metal poisoning

**porta** /'pɔ:tə/ *noun* an opening which allows blood vessels to pass into an organ (NOTE: The plural is **portae**.)

**Portacath** /'pɔ:təkæθ/ *noun* a type of catheter put in place under a person's skin to make it easier to have chemotherapy, transfusions and blood tests. It is accessed by the use of a special needle and flushed regularly with sterile saline.

**portacaval** /,pɔ:tə'keɪv(ə)l/ *adjective* another spelling of **portocaval**

**portae** /'pɔ:ti/ plural of **porta**

**porta hepatis** /,pɔ:tə 'hepətɪs/ *noun* an opening in the liver through which the hepatic artery, hepatic duct and portal vein pass (NOTE: The plural is **portae hepatitis**.)

**portal** /'pɔ:t(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to a porta, especially the portal system or the portal vein

**portal hypertension** /,pɔ:t(ə)l ,haɪpə'tenʃən/ *noun* high pressure in the portal vein, caused by cirrhosis of the liver or a clot in the vein and causing internal bleeding

**portal system** /'pɔ:t(ə)l ,sɪstəm/ *noun* a group of veins which have capillaries at both ends and do not go to the heart

**portal vein** /'pɔ:t(ə)l veɪn/ *noun* a vein which takes blood from the stomach, pancreas, gall bladder, intestines and spleen to the liver (NOTE: For other terms referring to the portal vein, see words beginning with **pyl-**, **pyle-**.)

**portocaval** /,pɔ:təu'keɪv(ə)l/ *adjective* linking the portal vein to the inferior vena cava

**portocaval anastomosis** /,pɔ:təu'keɪv(ə)l ən,æstə'moʊsɪs/ *noun* a surgical operation to join the portal vein to the inferior vena cava and divert blood past the liver

**portocaval shunt** /,pɔ:təu'keɪv(ə)l 'ʃʌnt/ *noun* an artificial passage made between the portal vein and the inferior vena cava to relieve portal hypertension

**port wine stain** /,pɔ:t 'waɪn ,steɪn/ *noun* a purple birthmark

**position** /pə'zɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* **1.** the place where something is ○ *The exact position of the tumour is located by an X-ray.* **2.** the way a person's body is arranged ○ *in a sitting position* ○ *The accident victim had been placed in the recovery position.*

■ *verb* to place something in a particular position ○ *The fetus is correctly positioned in the uterus.*

**positive** /'pɒzɪtɪv/ *adjective* **1.** indicating the answer 'yes' **2.** indicating the presence of something being tested for ○ *Her cervical smear was positive.* Opposite **negative**

**positive end-expiratory pressure** /,pɒzɪtɪv ,end ɪk,spraɪət(ə)rɪ 'preʃə/ *noun* the procedure of forcing a person to breathe through a mask in cases where fluid has collected in the lungs. Abbreviation **PEEP**

**positive feedback** /,pɒzɪtɪv 'fɪ:dbæk/ *noun* a situation in which the result of a process stimulates the process which caused it

**positive pressure respirator** /,pɒzɪtɪv 'preʃə ,respraɪtə/ *noun* a machine which forces air into the lungs through a tube inserted in the mouth

**positive pressure ventilation** /,pɒzɪtɪv 'preʃə ventɪ,leɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the act of forcing air into the lungs to encourage the lungs to expand. Abbreviation **PPV**

**positron-emission tomography** /,pɒzɪtrɒn ɪ'mɪʃ(ə)n tə,mɒgrəfi/ *noun* a method of scanning the tissues of the brain, chest and abdomen for unusual metabolic activity after injecting a radioactive substance into the body. Abbreviation **PET**

**posology** /pə'sɒlədʒi/ *noun* the study of doses of medicine

**possetting** /'pɒsɪtɪŋ/ *noun* (in babies) the act of bringing up small quantities of curdled milk into the mouth after feeding

**Possum** /'pɒsəm/ *noun* a device using electronic switches which helps a person who is severely paralysed to work a machine such as a telephone (NOTE: The name is derived from the first letters of **patient-operated selector mechanism**.)

**post-** /pəʊst/ *prefix* after or later

**post-cibal** /,pəʊst 'saɪb(ə)/ *adjective* after having eaten food

**post cibum** /,pəʊst 'kɪbəm/ *adverb* full form of **p.c.**

**post-coital** /,pəʊst 'kɔɪt(ə)/ *adjective* taking place after sexual intercourse

**postconvulsional syndrome** /,pəʊstkɒn 'kʌʃ(ə)n(ə)l ,sɪndrəʊm/ *noun* a set of symptoms which sometimes follow a head injury in which a person lost consciousness, including headache, loss of concentration, memory loss, depression and irritability

**post-epileptic** /,pəʊst epɪ'leptɪk/ *adjective* taking place after an epileptic fit

**posterior** /pɒ'stɪəriə/ *adjective* at the back. Opposite **anterior** □ **posterior** to behind ○ *The cerebellum is posterior to the medulla oblongata.* ■ *noun* same as **buttock** (informal)

**posterior approach** /pɒ'stɪəriər ə'prəʊtʃ/ *noun* an operation carried out from the back

**posterior aspect** /pɒ'stɪəriər 'æspekt/ *noun* a view of the back of the body, or of the back of part of the body. See illustration at **ANATOMICAL TERMS** in Supplement

**posterior chamber** /pɒ'stɪəriə 'tʃeɪmbə/ *noun* a part of the aqueous chamber which is behind the iris

**posterior fontanelle** /pɒ'stɪəriə 'fɒntə'neɪl/ *noun* a cartilage at the back of the head where the parietal bones join the occipital. † **bregma**

**posterior nares** /pɒ'stɪəriə 'neəri:z/ *plural noun* same as **internal nares**

**postero-** /pɒstərəʊ/ *prefix* back or behind

**posteroanterior** /,pɒstərəʊæn'tɪəriə/ *adjective* lying from the back to the front

**post-exposure prophylaxis** /,pəʊst ɪk ,sprəʊʒə ,prɒfə'læksɪs/ *noun* a treatment given to a person who has been exposed to a harmful agent, in an effort to prevent or reduce injury or infection. Abbreviation **PEP**

**postganglionic neurone** /,pəʊstgæŋɡli ,nɔɪk 'njʊərəʊn/ *noun* a neurone which starts in a ganglion and ends in a gland or unstriated muscle

**postgastroctomy syndrome** /,pəʊst gæ 'strektəmi ,sɪndrəʊm/ *noun* a group of symptoms which can occur after eating in people who have had stomach operations. It is caused by a lot

of food passing into the small intestine too fast and can cause dizziness, nausea, sweating and weakness. Also called **dumping syndrome**

**posthepatic jaundice** /,pəʊstɪ'pætɪk 'dʒɔ:ndɪs/ *noun* same as **obstructive jaundice**

**post herpetic neuralgia** /,pəʊst hæ'petɪk nju'reɪldʒə/ *noun* pains felt after an attack of shingles

**posthitis** /pɒs'thɑɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the foreskin

**posthumous** /'pɒstjʊməs/ *adjective* occurring after death

**postmature** /,pəʊstmə'tʃʊə/ *adjective* referring to a baby born after the usual gestation period of 42 weeks

**postmature baby** /,pəʊstmətʃʊə 'beɪbi/ *noun* a baby born more than nine months after conception

**postmaturity** /,pəʊstmə'tʃʊərɪti/ *noun* a pregnancy which lasts longer than the usual gestation period of 42 weeks

**postmenopausal** /,pəʊstmenəʊ'pɔ:z(ə)/ *adjective* happening or existing after the menopause ○ *She experienced some postmenopausal bleeding.*

**post mortem** /,pəʊst 'mɔ:təm/, **post mortem examination** /,pəʊst 'mɔ:təm ɪgzæmɪ ,neɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* an examination of a dead body by a pathologist to find out the cause of death ○ *The post mortem showed that he had been poisoned.* Abbreviation **PM**. Also called **autopsy**

**postnasal** /pəʊst'neɪz(ə)/ *adjective* situated or happening behind the nose

**postnasal drip** /pəʊst,neɪz(ə)l 'drɪp/ *noun* a condition in which mucus from the nose runs down into the throat and is swallowed

**postnatal** /pəʊst'neɪt(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to the period after the birth of a child

**postnatal care** /pəʊst,neɪt(ə)l 'keə/ *noun* the care given to a woman after the birth of her child

**postnatal depression** /pəʊst,neɪt(ə)l dɪ 'preʃ(ə)n/ *noun* depression which sometimes affects a woman after childbirth

**postnecrotic cirrhosis** /,pəʊstnek'rɒtɪk sɪ 'rəʊsɪs/ *noun* cirrhosis of the liver caused by viral hepatitis

**post-op** /,pəʊst 'ɒp/ *adjective* same as **postoperative** (informal)

**postoperative** /pəʊst'ɒp(ə)rətɪv/ *adjective* referring to the period after a surgical operation ○ *The patient has suffered postoperative nausea and vomiting.* ○ *Occlusion may appear as postoperative angina pectoris.*

**postoperative pain** /pəʊst,ɒp(ə)rətɪv 'peɪn/ *noun* pain felt after a surgical operation

**postpartum** /pəʊst'pɑ:təm/ *adjective* referring to the period after the birth of a child

**postpartum fever** /pəʊst,pɑ:təm 'fi:vəl/ *noun* same as **puerperal infection**

**postpartum haemorrhage** /pəʊst,pɑ:təm 'hem(ə)rɪdʒ/ *noun* heavy bleeding after childbirth. Abbreviation **PPH**

**post-primary tuberculosis** /pəʊst ,praɪməri tʃu:bɜ:kju'ləʊsɪs/ *noun* the reappearance of tuberculosis in a person who has been infected with it before

**post-registration education and practice** /,pəʊst redʒɪ,streɪf(ə)n edʒu,keɪf(ə)n ænd 'præktɪs/ *noun* in the UK, the requirement for all registered nurses and midwives to undertake educational activities and keep up with contemporary practice, and also for their employers to address the learning needs of staff. It was started by the UKCC in 1993. Abbreviation **PREP**

**post-traumatic** /,pəʊst trɔ:'mætrɪk/ *adjective* appearing after a trauma, e.g. after an accident, rape or fire

**post-traumatic amnesia** /,pəʊst trɔ:'mætrɪk æm'nɪziə/ *noun* amnesia which follows a trauma

**post-traumatic stress disorder** /,pəʊst trɔ:'mætrɪk 'stres dɪs,ɔ:də/ *noun* a psychological condition affecting people who have suffered severe emotional trauma, e.g. occasioned by war or natural disaster. Its symptoms include chest pain, dizziness, sleep disturbances, flashbacks, anxiety, tiredness, and depression. Abbreviation **PTSD**

**postural** /'pɒstʃərəl/ *adjective* referring to posture ○ *a study of postural disorders*

**postural drainage** /,pɒstʃərəl 'dreɪnɪdʒ/ *noun* a procedure for removing matter from infected lungs by making the person lie down with the head lower than the feet, so that he or she can cough more easily

**postural hypotension** /,pɒstʃərəl ,haɪpəʊ 'tenʃən/ *noun* low blood pressure when standing up suddenly, causing dizziness

**posture** /'pɒstʃə/ *noun* the position in which a body is arranged, or the way a person usually holds his or her body when standing ○ *Bad posture can cause pain in the back.* ○ *She has to do exercises to correct her bad posture.*

**postviral** /pəʊst'vaɪrəl/ *adjective* occurring after a viral infection

**postviral fatigue syndrome** /pəʊst,vaɪrəl fə'ti:g ,sɪndrəʊm/ *noun* same as **myalgic encephalomyelitis**

**potassium** /pə'tæsiəm/ *noun* a metallic element (NOTE: The chemical symbol is **K**.)

**potassium permanganate** /pə'tæsiəm pə'mæŋɡənət/ *noun* a purple-coloured poisonous salt, used as a disinfectant

**Pott's fracture** /'pɒts ,fræktʃəl/ *noun* a fracture of the lower end of the fibula together with displacement of the ankle and foot outwards

[Described 1765. After Sir Percivall Pott (1714–88), London surgeon.]

**pouch** /paʊtʃ/ *noun* a small sac or pocket attached to an organ

**poultice** /'pɒlɪtɪs/ *noun* a compress made of hot water and flour paste or other substances which is pressed onto an infected part to draw out pus, to relieve pain or to encourage the circulation. Also called **fomentation**

**Poupart's ligament** /'pu:pɑ:ts ,lɪɡəmənt/ *noun* same as **inguinal ligament** [Described 1705. After François Poupart (1616–1708), French surgeon and anatomist.]

**powder** /'paʊdə/ *noun* a medicine in the form of a fine dry dust made from particles of drugs ○ *He took a powder to help his indigestion* or *He took an indigestion powder.*

**pox** /pɒks/ *noun* same as **syphilis (old)**

**poxvirus** /'pɒks,vʌɪrəs/ *noun* any of a group of viruses which cause cowpox, smallpox and related diseases

**p.p.** *abbreviation* after a meal. Full form **post prandium**

**PPH** *abbreviation* postpartum haemorrhage

**PPV** *abbreviation* positive pressure ventilation

**PQRST complex** *noun* the set of deflections on an electrocardiogram, labelled P to T, which show ventricular contraction

**p.r.** *adverb* (of an examination) by the rectum. Full form **per rectum**

**practice** /'præktɪs/ *noun* **1.** the business, or the premises occupied by, a doctor, dentist, or a group of doctors or dentists working together ○ *After qualifying she joined her father's practice.* □ **in practice** doing the work of a doctor or dentist ○ *He has been in practice for six years.* **2.** the fact of doing something, as opposed to thinking or talking about it ○ *theory and practice* **3.** a usual way of doing something ○ *Such practices are now regarded as unsafe.*

**practice nurse** /'præktɪs nɜ:s/ *noun* a nurse employed by a GP or primary care trust to work in a GP's practice providing treatment, health promotion, screening and other services to patients of the practice

**practitioner** /præk'tɪʃ(ə)nəl/ *noun* a qualified person who works in the medical profession

**prævia** /'pri:viə/ *noun* ▶ **placenta prævia**

**pravastatin** /,prævə'stætɪn/ *noun* a drug used to reduce unusually high levels of blood cholesterol

**prazosin** /'præzəsɪn/ *noun* a drug which relaxes and widens the blood vessels, used to treat hypertension

**pre-** /pri:/ *prefix* before or in front of

**preadmission information** /,pri:əd'mɪʃ(ə)nɪnfə,meɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* information given to a person before he or she is admitted to hospital

**pre-anaesthetic round** /ˌpriː ˌænəs'θetɪk ˌraʊnd/ *noun* an examination of patients by the surgeon before they are anaesthetised

**precancerous** /priː'kænsərəs/ *adjective* referring to a growth which is not malignant now, but which can become cancerous later

**preceptor** /priː'septə/ *noun* a specialist who gives practical training to a student

**preceptorship** /priː'septəʃɪp/ *noun* a period of time during which a recently trained nurse, midwife or health visitor can gain practical experience working with a specialist who advises and guides them

**precipitate** /priː'sɪpɪtət/ *noun* a substance which is precipitated during a chemical reaction  
**verb** **1.** to make a substance separate from a chemical compound and fall to the bottom of a liquid during a chemical reaction ○ *Casein is precipitated when milk comes into contact with an acid.* **2.** to make something start suddenly (NOTE: [all verb senses] **precipitating** – **precipitated**)

**precipitate labour** /priː'sɪpɪtət 'leɪbəl *noun* unusually fast labour, lasting two hours or less. It can be dangerous both to the mother and to the child.

**precipitin** /priː'sɪpɪtɪn/ *noun* an antibody which reacts to an antigen and forms a precipitate, used in many diagnostic tests

**precocious** /priː'kəʊʃəs/ *adjective* more physically or mentally developed than is usual for a specific age

**precocious puberty** /priː'kəʊʃəs 'pjuːbətɪ/ *noun* the development of signs of puberty in girls before the age of seven, and in boys before the age of nine. If untreated, affected boys typically grow no taller than 1.6 metres and girls rarely reach 1.5 metres.

**precocity** /priː'kɒsɪti/ *noun* the state or fact of being precocious

**precordia** /priː'kɔːdiəl/ *plural noun* plural of **precordial**

**precordial** /priː'kɔːdiəl/ *adjective* referring to the precordium

**precordium** /priː'kɔːdiəm/ *noun* the part of the thorax over the heart (NOTE: The plural is **precordia**.)

**precursor** /priː'kɜːsə/ *noun* a substance or cell from which another substance or cell is developed, e.g. *dopa*, the precursor for dopamine, which is converted to dopamine by the enzyme *dopa decarboxylase*

**predisposing factor** /ˌpriːdɪspəʊzɪŋ 'fæktə/ *noun* a factor which will increase the risk of disease

**prednisolone** /pred'nɪsələʊn/ *noun* a synthetically produced steroid hormone, similar to cortisone, used especially to control inflammatory diseases such as rheumatoid arthritis

**prednisone** /pred'nɪsəʊn/ *noun* a synthetically produced steroid hormone produced from cortisone, used to treat allergies and rheumatoid arthritis

**pre-eclampsia** /ˌpriː rɪ'klæmpsɪə/ *noun* a condition in pregnant women towards the end of the pregnancy which may lead to eclampsia. Symptoms are high blood pressure, oedema and protein in the urine. Also called **pregnancy-induced hypertension**

**pre-eclamptic** /ˌpriː rɪ'klæmptɪk/ *adjective* referring to pre-eclampsia

**prefrontal leucotomy** /priː'frʌnt(ə)l lʊiː 'kɒtəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to divide some of the white matter in the prefrontal lobe, formerly used as a treatment for schizophrenia

**prefrontal lobe** /priː'frʌnt(ə)l ləʊb/ *noun* an area of the brain in the front part of each hemisphere, in front of the frontal lobe, which is concerned with memory and learning

**preganglionic neurone** /ˌpriː'gæŋɡli,ɒnɪk 'njuːərəʊn/ *noun* a neurone which ends in a ganglion

**pregnancy** /'pregnənsɪ/ *noun **1.** same as **gestation period** **2.** the condition of being pregnant. Also called **cyesis***

**pregnancy-induced hypertension** /ˌpregnənsɪ ɪn'djuːst ˌhaɪpə'tenʃən/ *noun* same as **pre-eclampsia**

**pregnancy test** /'pregnənsɪ test/ *noun* a test to see if a woman is pregnant or not

**pregnant** /'pregnənt/ *adjective* with an unborn child in the uterus ○ *She is six months pregnant.*

**prehepatic jaundice** /ˌpriːhɪ'pætɪk 'dʒɔːndɪs/ *noun* same as **haemolytic jaundice**

**prem** /prem/ (*informal*) *adjective* same as **premature** **noun** a premature baby

**premature** /'premətʃəl/ *adjective* before the expected or desirable time ○ *The baby was five weeks premature.*

COMMENT: Babies can survive even if born several weeks premature. Even babies weighing less than one kilo at birth can survive in an incubator, and develop healthily.

**premature baby** /ˌpremətʃəl 'beɪbi/ *noun* a baby born earlier than 37 weeks from conception, or weighing less than 2.5kg, but capable of independent life

**premature birth** /ˌpremətʃəl 'bɜːθ/ *noun* the birth of a baby earlier than 37 weeks from conception

**premature ejaculation** /ˌpremətʃəl ɪ,dʒækjʊ 'leɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a situation in which a man ejaculates too early during sexual intercourse

**premature labour** /ˌpremətʃəl 'leɪbəl *noun* the condition of starting to give birth earlier than 37 weeks from conception ○ *After the accident she went into premature labour.*

**premed** /'pri:med/ *noun* a stage of being given premedication (*informal*) ○ *The patient is in premed.*

**premedication** /,pri:medɪ'keɪʃ(ə)n/, **premedicant drug** /'pri:,medɪkənt 'drʌg/ *noun* a drug given before an operation in order to block the parasympathetic nervous system and prevent vomiting during the operation, e.g. a sedative

**premenstrual** /'pri:'menstruəl/ *adjective* happening before menstruation

**premenstrual syndrome** /'pri:,menstruəl 'sɪndrəʊm/, **premenstrual tension** /'pri:,menstruəl 'tenʃən/ *noun* nervous stress experienced by a woman for one or two weeks before a menstrual period starts. Abbreviation **PMS**, **PMT**  
**premolar** /'pri:'məʊl/ *noun* a tooth with two points, situated between the canines and the first proper molar. See illustration at **TEETH** in Supplement

**prenatal** /'pri:'neɪt(ə)/ *adjective* during the period between conception and childbirth

**prenatal diagnosis** /'pri:,neɪt(ə)l ,daɪəg 'naʊsɪs/ *noun* same as **antenatal diagnosis**

**pre-op** /'pri:'ɒp/ *adjective* same as **preoperative** (*informal*)

**preoperative** /'pri:'ɒp(ə)rətɪv/ *adjective* during the period before a surgical operation

**preoperative medication** /'pri:,ɒp(ə)rətɪv ,medɪ'keɪʃən/ *noun* a drug given before an operation, e.g. a sedative

**PREP** /prep/ *abbreviation* post-registration education and practice

**prepatellar bursitis** /,pri:pə'telə bɜ:'saɪtɪs/ *noun* a condition in which the fluid sac at the knee becomes inflamed, caused by kneeling on hard surfaces. Also called **housemaid's knee**

**prepubertal** /'pri:'pju:bət(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to the period before puberty

**prepuce** /'pri:pju:s/ *noun* same as **foreskin**

**presby-** /prezbi/ *prefix* same as **presbyo-** (*used before vowels*)

**presbycusis** /,prezbi'ku:sɪs/ *noun* a condition in which an elderly person's hearing fails gradually, through to degeneration of the internal ear

**presbyo-** /prezbiəʊ/ *prefix* referring to the last stages of the natural life span

**presbyopia** /,prezbi'əʊpiə/ *noun* a condition in which an elderly person's sight fails gradually, through hardening of the lens

**prescribed disease** /'pri:,skraɪbd dɪ'zi:z/ *noun* an illness caused by the type of work a person does which is on an annually reviewed official list, entitling the person to claim benefit. Examples are deafness, pneumoconiosis and RSI.

**prescribing analyses and cost** /'pri:,skraɪbɪŋ ə,nælsɪ:z ənd 'kɒst/ *plural noun* data

on the prescribing of drugs in primary care. Abbreviation **PACT**

**prescription** /'pri:'skrɪpʃən/ *noun* an order written by a doctor to a pharmacist asking for a drug to be prepared and given or sold to a person

**presenile** /'pri:'si:nail/ *adjective* prematurely showing the effects of advanced age

**presenile dementia** /'pri:,si:nail dɪ'menʃə/ *noun* mental degeneration affecting adults of around 40–60 years of age (*dated*)

COMMENT: Patients used to be diagnosed with presenile dementia if they showed symptoms of dementia and were under the age of 65, and senile dementia if over 65. However, the terms are no longer often used and instead the type of dementia is used for diagnostic purposes, e.g. Alzheimer's disease, multi-infarct or vascular.

**present** /'prez(ə)nt/ *verb* /'pri:'zent/ **1.** (*of a patient*) to show particular symptoms ○ *The patient presented with severe chest pains.* **2.** (*of a symptom*) to be present ○ *The doctors' first task is to relieve the presenting symptoms.* ○ *The condition may also present in a baby.* **3.** (*of a baby*) to appear in the vaginal channel ■ *adjective* currently existing in a place ○ *All the symptoms of the disease are present.*

**presentation** /,prez(ə)n'teɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the way in which a baby will be born, in respect of the part of the baby's body which will appear first in the vaginal channel

**presenting part** /'pri:'zentɪŋ pɑ:t/ *noun* the part of a baby which appears first during birth

**pressor** /'presə/ *adjective* **1.** referring to a nerve which increases the action of part of the body **2.** raising blood pressure

**pressure** /'preʃə/ *noun* the action of squeezing or forcing something

**pressure area** /'preʃə ,eəriə/ *noun* an area of the body where a bone is near the surface of the skin, so that if the skin is pressed the circulation will be cut off

**pressure bandage** /'preʃə ,bændɪdʒ/ *noun* a bandage which presses on a part of the body

**pressure index** /'preʃə ,ɪndeks/ *noun* a method for determining the extent of obstruction to the artery in the leg by measuring the blood pressure in the arms and legs and then dividing the systolic pressure in the leg by that in the arm. Abbreviation **PI**

**pressure point** /'preʃə pɔɪnt/ *noun* a place where an artery crosses over a bone, so that the blood can be cut off by pressing with the finger

**presystole** /'pri:'sɪstəli/ *noun* the period before systole in the cycle of heartbeats

**preterm** /'pri:'tɜ:m/ *adjective* referring to the birth of a child which takes place before the expected time

**preterm birth** /pri:'tɜ:m ˌbɜ:θ/ *noun* the birth of a baby before 37 completed weeks of pregnancy, which presents a greater risk of serious health problems (NOTE: About 12 per cent of births in the UK are preterm births.)

**preventative** /prɪ'ventətɪv/ *adjective* same as **preventive**

**preventive** /prɪ'ventɪv/ *adjective* referring to an action taken to stop something happening, especially to stop a disease or infection from spreading ○ *preventive treatment* ○ *preventive action*

**preventive medicine** /prɪ'ventɪv 'med(ə)s(ə)n/ *noun* carried out to stop disease from occurring, e.g. by education in health-related issues, immunisation and screening for known diseases

**Priadel** /'praɪədel/ a trade name for lithium

**priapism** /'praɪəpɪz(ə)m/ *noun* an erection of the penis without sexual stimulus, caused by a blood clot in the tissue of the penis, injury to the spinal cord or stone in the urinary bladder

**prickly heat** /'prɪkli hi:t/ *noun* same as **miliaria**

**-pril** /prɪl/ *suffix* used for ACE inhibitors ○ *Cap-topril*

**prilocaine** /'praɪləkeɪn/ *noun* a local anaesthetic used especially in dentistry

**primaquine** /'praɪmækwi:n/ *noun* a synthetically produced drug used in the treatment of malaria

**primary** /'praɪməri/ *adjective* **1.** happening first, and leading to something else **2.** most important

**primary amenorrhoea** /,praɪməri ˌemənə 'ri:ə/ *noun* a condition in which a woman has never had menstrual periods

**primary bronchi** /,praɪməri 'brɒŋki:/ *plural noun* same as **main bronchi**

**primary care** /,praɪməri 'keə/ *noun* in the UK, health services offered directly to individuals by GPs, dentists, opticians and other health professionals who may also refer a patient on to specialists for further treatment. Also called **primary health care**, **primary medical care**. Compare **secondary care**, **tertiary care**

**primary care group** /,praɪməri 'keə ˌgru:p/ *noun* an organisation responsible for overseeing the provision of primary healthcare and the commissioning of secondary care in a district. Key members include GPs, community nurses, social services and lay members. Abbreviation **PCG**

**primary care team** /,praɪməri 'keə ˌti:m/ *noun* same as **primary health care team**

**primary care trust** /,praɪməri 'keə ˌtrʌst/ *noun* in the UK, the top level of the primary care group with extra responsibilities such as direct

employment of community staff. Abbreviation **PCT**

**primary haemorrhage** /,praɪməri 'hem(ə)rɪdʒ/ *noun* bleeding which occurs immediately after an injury has taken place

**primary health care** /,praɪməri 'helθ ˌkeə/ *noun* same as **primary care**

**primary health care team** /,praɪməri 'helθ keə ˌti:m/ *noun* a group of professional medical workers who have first contact with someone needing medical attention and are responsible for delivering a range of health care services. Abbreviation **PHCT**

**primary medical care** /,praɪməri 'medɪk(ə)l ˌkeə/ *noun* same as **primary care**

**primary nurse** /,praɪməri 'nɜ:s/ *noun* a nurse who is responsible for planning a person's nursing care in consultation with that person and his or her family. In the absence of the primary nurse, associate nurses provide care based on the plan designed by the primary nurse.

**primary nursing** /,praɪməri 'nɜ:sɪŋ/ *noun* a model of nursing that involves the delivery of comprehensive, continuous, co-ordinated and individualised patient care through a primary nurse, who has autonomy, accountability and authority in relation to his or her patient's care

**primary tooth** /'praɪməri tu:θ/ *noun* any one of the first twenty teeth which develop in children between about six months and two-and-a-half years of age, and are replaced by the permanent teeth at around the age of six. Also called **milk tooth**, **deciduous tooth**

**primary tuberculosis** /,praɪməri tju: ˌbɜ:kjuː'ləʊsɪs/ *noun* a person's first infection with tuberculosis

**primary tumour** /,praɪməri 'tju:mə/ *noun* a site of the original malignant growth from which cancer spreads

**prime** /praɪm/ *adjective* **1.** of the greatest importance or the highest rank **2.** of the highest quality ■ *noun* the best state or period of something, especially the most active and enjoyable period in adult life ■ *verb* to make something ready for use, or to become ready for use (NOTE: **priming** – **primed**)

**prime mover** /,praɪm 'mu:və/ *noun* **1.** same as **agonist** **2.** somebody or something which has the most influence over the starting of a process or activity

**primigravida** /,praɪmɪ'grævɪdə/, **primigravid patient** /,praɪmɪ'grævɪd ˌpeɪʃ(ə)nt/ *noun* a woman who is pregnant for the first time (NOTE: The plural is **primigravidas** or **primigravidae**.)

**primipara** /praɪ'mɪpərə/ *noun* a woman who has given birth to one child. Also called **unipara** (NOTE: The plural is **primiparas** or **primiparae**.)

**primordial** /praɪ'mɔ:diəl/ *adjective* in the very first stage of development

**primordial follicle** /praɪ,mɔ:diəl 'fɒlɪk(ə)l/ *noun* the first stage of development of an ovarian follicle

**P-R interval** /,pi: 'ɑ:r ,ɪntəv(ə)l/ *noun* the time recorded on an electrocardiogram between the start of atrial activity and ventricular activity

**prion** /'pri:ɒn/ *noun* a particle of protein which contains no nucleic acid, does not trigger an immune response and is not destroyed by extreme heat or cold. Prions are considered to be the agents responsible for scrapie, BSE, and Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease.

**priority despatch** /praɪ'ɒrɪti dɪ,spætʃ/ *noun* the process of talking to people who need medical help on the telephone in order to make sure that ambulances are sent to the most urgent cases first

**priority matrix** /praɪ'ɒrɪti ,meɪtrɪks/ *noun* a way of trying to make sure that each community has a fair number of services for its particular health needs

**private hospital** /,praɪvət 'hɒspɪt(ə)l/ *noun* a hospital which takes only paying patients

**private parts** /'praɪvət pɑ:ts/ *plural noun* the genital area (*informal*) Also called **privates**

**private patient** /,praɪvət 'peɪf(ə)nt/ *noun* a patient who is paying for treatment and who is not being treated under the National Health Service

**privates** /'praɪvəts/ *plural noun* same as **private parts** (*informal*)

**p.r.n.** *adverb* (*written on a prescription*) as and when required. Full form **pro re nata**

**pro-** /prəʊ/ *prefix* before or in front of

**probe** /prəʊb/ *noun* an instrument used to explore inside a cavity or wound ■ *verb* to investigate the inside of something ○ *The surgeon probed the wound with a scalpel.* (NOTE: **probing** – **probed**)

**problem** /'prɒbləm/ *noun* **1.** something which is difficult to find an answer to ○ *Scientists are trying to find a solution to the problem of drug-related disease.* **2.** a medical disorder ○ *heart problems* □ **he has an alcohol problem or a drugs problem** he is addicted to alcohol or drugs **3.** an addiction to something ○ *has a drug problem*

**problem child** /'prɒbləm tʃaɪld/ *noun* a child who is difficult to control

**problem drinking** /,prɒbləm 'drɪŋkɪŋ/ *noun* alcoholism or heavy drinking which has a bad effect on a person's behaviour or work

**problem-oriented record** /,prɒbləm ,ɔ:riəntɪd 'rekɔ:d/ *noun* a record of patient care which links patients' clinical data with their problems, so that all aspects of the care process are focused on resolving those problems

**problem-solving approach** /'prɒbləm ,sɒlvɪŋ ə,prəʊtʃ/ *noun* the provision of nursing care based on assessment, problem identification

(nursing diagnosis), planning implementation (nursing intervention) and evaluation

**process** /'prəʊses/ *noun* **1.** a technical or scientific action ○ *A new process for testing serum samples has been developed in the research laboratory.* **2.** a projecting part of the body ■ **verb** **1.** to deal with a person or thing according to a standard procedure **2.** to examine or test samples ○ *The blood samples are being processed by the laboratory.*

**prochlorperazine** /,prəʊklɔ:'perəzi:n/ *noun* a drug used to control nausea and vomiting, and to reduce the symptoms of Ménière's disease, migraine and anxiety

**procentia** /,prəʊsɪ'denʃə/ *noun* movement of an organ downwards

**proct-** /prɒkt/ *prefix* same as **procto-** (*used before vowels*)

**proctalgia** /prɒk'tældʒə/ *noun* pain in the lower rectum or anus, caused by neuralgia

**proctalgia fugax** /prɒk,tældʒə 'fju:gæks/ *noun* a condition in which a person has sudden pains in the rectum during the night, usually relieved by eating or drinking

**proctatresia** /,prɒktə'tri:ziə/ *noun* a condition in which the anus does not have an opening. Also called **imperforate anus**

**proctectasia** /prɒktek'teɪziə/ *noun* a condition in which the rectum or anus is dilated because of continued constipation

**proctectomy** /prɒk'tektəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to remove the rectum (NOTE: The plural is **proctectomies**.)

**proctitis** /prɒk'taɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the rectum

**procto-** /prɒktəʊ/ *prefix* the anus or rectum

**proctocoele** /'prɒktəsi:l/ *noun* same as **rectocoele**

**proctocolectomy** /,prɒktəʊkɒ'lektəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to remove the rectum and the colon (NOTE: The plural is **proctocolectomies**.)

**proctocolitis** /,prɒktəkə'laitɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the rectum and part of the colon

**proctodynia** /,prɒktə'dɪniə/ *noun* a sensation of pain in the anus

**proctogram** /'prɒktəgræm/ *noun* an X-ray photograph of the rectum taken after a contrast agent is introduced

**proctologist** /prɒk'tɒlədʒɪst/ *noun* a specialist in proctology

**proctology** /prɒk'tɒlədʒi/ *noun* the scientific study of the rectum and anus and their associated diseases

**proctorrhaphy** /prɒk'tɔ:rəfi/ *noun* a surgical operation to stitch up a tear in the rectum or anus (NOTE: The plural is **proctorrhaphies**.)

**proctoscope** /'prɒktəskəʊp/ *noun* a surgical instrument consisting of a long tube with a light in the end, used to examine the rectum

**proctoscopy** /prɒk'tɒskəpi/ *noun* an examination of the rectum using a proctoscope (NOTE: The plural is **proctoscopies**.)

**proctosigmoiditis** /,prɒktəʊ,sɪgmɔɪ'daɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the rectum and the sigmoid colon

**proctotomy** /prɒk'tɒtəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to divide a structure of the rectum or anus (NOTE: The plural is **proctotomies**.)

**prodromal** /prəu'drəʊm(ə)l/ *adjective* occurring between the appearance of the first symptoms of a disease and the major effect, e.g. a fever or rash

**prodromal rash** /prəʊ,drəʊm(ə)l 'ræʃ/ *noun* a rash which appears as a symptom of a disease before the major rash

**prodrome** /'prəʊdrəʊm/, **prodroma** /prəu'drəʊm/ *noun* an early symptom of an attack of a disease

**productive cough** /prə'dʌktɪv 'kɒf/ *noun* a cough where phlegm is produced

**profession** /prə'feʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a type of job for which special training is needed

**professional** /prə'feʃ(ə)nəl/ *adjective* referring to a profession

**professional body** /prə,feʃ(ə)nəl 'bɒdi/ *noun* an organisation which acts for all the members of a profession

**Professional Conduct Committee** /prə,feʃ(ə)n(ə)l 'kɒndʌkt kə,mɪti/ *noun* a committee of the General Medical Council which decides on cases of professional misconduct. Abbreviation **PCC**

**Professional Executive Committee** /prə,feʃ(ə)nəl ɪg'zekjʊtɪv kə,mɪti/ *noun* full form of **PEC**

**profile** /'prəʊfaɪl/ *noun* **1.** a brief description of the characteristics of a person or thing **2.** a set of data, usually in graph or table form, which indicates to what extent something has the same characteristics as a group tested or considered standard **3.** the amount that other people notice somebody or something ■ *verb* to give a short description or assessment of somebody or something (NOTE: **profiling** – **profiled**)

**profunda** /prə'fʌndə/ *adjective* referring to blood vessels which lie deep in tissues

**profundoplasty** /prə'fʌndəplæsti/ *noun* a surgical operation to widen a junction of the femoral artery, in order to relieve narrowing by atherosclerosis (NOTE: The plural is **profundoplasties**.)

**progeny** /'prɒdʒəni/ *noun* a person's child or children (NOTE: Takes a singular or plural verb.)

**progeria** /prəu'dʒɪəriə/ *noun* a condition of premature ageing. Also called **Hutchinson-Gilford syndrome**

**progesterone** /prəu'dʒestərəʊn/ *noun* a hormone which is produced in the second part of the menstrual cycle by the corpus luteum and which stimulates the formation of the placenta if an ovum is fertilised (NOTE: Progesterone is also produced by the placenta itself.)

**progestogen** /prə'dʒestədʒən/ *noun* any substance which has the same effect as progesterone

**prognathic jaw** /prɒg,næθɪk 'dʒɔː/ *noun* a jaw which protrudes further than the other

**prognathism** /'prɒgnəθɪz(ə)m/ *noun* a condition in which one jaw, especially the lower jaw, or both jaws protrude

**prognosis** /prɒg'nəʊsɪs/ *noun* an opinion of how a disease or disorder will develop ○ *This cancer has a prognosis of about two years.* ○ *The prognosis is not good.* (NOTE: The plural is **prognoses**.)

**progressive** /prə'gresɪv/ *adjective* developing all the time ○ *Alzheimer's disease is a progressive disorder which sees a gradual decline in intellectual functioning.*

**progressive deafness** /prə,gresɪv 'defnəs/ *noun* a condition, common in people as they get older, in which a person gradually becomes more and more deaf

**progressive muscular atrophy** /prə,gresɪv ,mʌskjʊlə 'ætrəfi/ *noun* muscular dystrophy, with progressive weakening of the muscles, particularly in the pelvic and shoulder girdles

**proguanil** /prəu'gwæni:l/ *noun* a drug used in the prevention and treatment of malaria

**project** /prə'dʒekt/ *verb* to protrude or stick out

**Project 2000** /,prɒdʒekt tu: 'θaʊz(ə)nd/ *noun* a revision of nursing education introduced by the UKCC in 1989. It included new courses which prepare individuals to work in all settings, both in hospitals and in the community, and gave a student the ability to qualify as a midwife without first qualifying as a nurse and the chance to gain specialist qualifications in all areas of practice.

**projection** /prə'dʒekʃən/ *noun* **1.** a part of the body which sticks out or stands out. Also called **prominence**. Compare **promontory 2.** (*in psychology*) mental action in which a person blames another person for his or her own faults

**prolactin** /prəu'læktɪn/ *noun* a hormone secreted by the pituitary gland which stimulates the production of milk. Also called **lactogenic hormone**

**prolapse** /'prəʊləps/ *noun* a condition in which an organ has moved downwards out of its usual position ■ *verb* to move downwards out of the usual position (NOTE: **prolapsing** – **prolapsed**)



**prolapsed intervertebral disc** /prəʊ,læpstɪntə,vɜ:təbrəl 'dɪsk/ *noun* a condition in which an intervertebral disc becomes displaced or where the soft centre of a disc passes through the hard cartilage of the exterior and presses onto a nerve. Abbreviation **PID**. Also called **slipped disc**

**prolapse of the rectum** /,prəʊlæps əv ðə 'rektəm/ *noun* a condition in which mucous membrane of the rectum moves downwards and passes through the anus

**prolapse of the uterus** /,prəʊlæps əv ðə 'ju:tərəs/, **prolapse of the womb** /,prəʊlæps əv ðə 'wu:m/ *noun* a movement of the uterus downwards due to weakening of the structures of the pelvic floor, e.g. because of age or a difficult childbirth. Also called **metroptosis**, **prolapsed uterus**, **uterine prolapse**

**proliferate** /prə'lifəreɪt/ *verb* to produce many similar cells or parts, and so grow (NOTE: **proliferating** – **proliferated**)

**proliferation** /prə,lɪfə'reɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the process of proliferating

**promethazine** /prəʊ'meθəzɪ:n/ *noun* an anti-histamine drug used in the treatment of allergies and motion sickness

**prominence** /'prɒmɪnəns/ *noun* a part of the body which sticks out or stands out. Also called **projection**. Compare **promontory**

**promontory** /'prɒmɒnt(ə)rɪ/ *noun* a section of an organ, especially the middle ear and sacrum which stands out above the rest. Compare **projection**, **prominence**

**pronation** /prəʊ'neɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the act of turning the hand round so that the palm faces downwards. Opposite **supination**. See illustration at **ANATOMICAL TERMS** in Supplement

**pronator** /prəʊ'neɪtə/ *noun* a muscle which makes the hand turn face downwards

**prone** /prəʊn/ *adjective* lying face downwards. Opposite **supine**

**prophase** /'prəʊfeɪz/ *noun* the first stage of mitosis when the chromosomes are visible as long thin double threads

**prophylactic** /,prɒfə'læktɪk/ *noun* a substance which helps to prevent the development of a disease ■ *adjective* preventative

**prophylaxis** /,prɒfə'læksɪs/ *noun* the prevention of disease (NOTE: The plural is **prophylaxes**.)

**propranolol** /prəʊ'pænənl/ *noun* a drug that slows heart rate and heart output, used in the treatment of angina pectoris, irregular heart rhythms, migraine and high blood pressure

**proprietary** /prə'praɪət(ə)rɪ/ *adjective* belonging to a commercial company

**proprietary medicine** /prə,praɪət(ə)rɪ'med(ə)s(ə)n/, **proprietary drug** /prə,praɪət(ə)rɪ'drʌg/ *noun* a drug which is sold under a trade name. † **patent medicine**

**proprietary name** /prə,praɪət(ə)rɪ 'neɪm/ *noun* a trade name for a drug

**proprioception** /,prəʊprɪə'sepʃən/ *noun* the reaction of nerves to body movements and the relaying of information about movements to the brain

**proprioceptor** /,prəʊprɪə'septə/ *noun* the end of a sensory nerve which reacts to stimuli from muscles and tendons as they move

**proptosis** /prɒp'təʊsɪs/ *noun* forward displacement of the eyeball

**prosop-** /prɒsəp/, **prosopo-** /prɒsəpəʊ/ *prefix* referring to the face

**prostaglandin** /,prɒstə'glændɪn/ *noun* any of a class of unsaturated fatty acids found in all mammals which control smooth muscle contraction, inflammation and body temperature, are associated with the sensation of pain and have an effect on the nervous system, blood pressure and in particular the uterus at menstruation

**prostate** /'prɒsteɪt/ *noun* same as **prostate gland** (NOTE: Do not confuse with **prostrate**.) □ **prostate trouble** inflammation or enlargement of the prostate gland (*informal*)

**prostate cancer** /'prɒsteɪt ,kænsəl *noun* a malignant tumour of the prostate gland, found especially in men over 55

**prostatectomy** /,prɒstə'tektəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to remove all or part of the prostate gland (NOTE: The plural is **prostatectomies**.)

**prostate gland** /'prɒsteɪt glænd/ *noun* an O-shaped gland in males which surrounds the urethra below the bladder and secretes a fluid containing enzymes into the sperm. See illustration at **UROGENITAL SYSTEM (MALE)** in Supplement. Also called **prostate**

COMMENT: As a man grows older, the prostate gland tends to enlarge and constrict the point at which the urethra leaves the bladder, making it difficult to pass urine.

**prostatic** /prɒ'stætɪk/ *adjective* referring to or belonging to the prostate gland

**prostatic hypertrophy** /prɒ'stætɪk haɪ'pɜ:tɹəfi/ *noun* an enlargement of the prostate gland

**prostatitis** /,prɒstə'taɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the prostate gland

**prostatorrhoea** /,prɒstətə'ri:ə/ *noun* discharge of fluid from the prostate gland (NOTE: The US spelling is **prostatorrhoea**.)

**prosthesis** /prɒs'thɪ:sɪs/ *noun* a device which is attached to the body to take the place of a part which is missing, e.g. an artificial leg or glass eye (NOTE: The plural is **prostheses**.)

**prosthetic** /prɒs'thetɪk/ *adjective* replacing a part of the body which has been amputated or removed ○ *He was fitted with a prosthetic hand.*

**prosthetic dentistry** /prɒs,θetɪk 'dentɪstri/ *noun* the branch of dentistry which deals with replacing missing teeth parts of the jaw, and fitting dentures, bridges and crowns. Also called **prosthodontics**

**prosthodontics** /,prɒsθə'dɒntɪks/ *noun* same as **prosthetic dentistry** (NOTE: Takes a singular verb.)

**prostrate** /'prɒstreɪt/ *adjective* lying face down (NOTE: Do not confuse with **prostate**.)

**prostration** /prɒ'streɪf(ə)n/ *noun* extreme tiredness of body or mind

**protamine** /'prəʊtəmi:n/ *noun* a simple protein found in fish, used with insulin to slow down the insulin absorption rate

**protanopia** /,prəʊtə'nəʊpiə/ *noun* same as **Daltonism**

**protease** /'prəʊtɪeɪz/ *noun* a digestive enzyme which breaks down protein in food by splitting the peptide link. Also called **proteolytic enzyme**

**Protection of Children Act 1999** /prə'tektʃən əv 'tʃɪldrən ,ækt/ *noun* in the UK, an Act of Parliament to protect children by restricting the employment of certain nurses, teachers or other workers whose jobs bring them into contact with children, on grounds such as misconduct or health

**protective isolation** /prə'tektɪv ,aɪsə 'leɪf(ə)n/ *noun* a set of procedures used to protect people who have impaired resistance to infectious disease, e.g. those with leukemia and lymphoma, Aids and graft patients. Also called **reverse isolation**

**protein** /'prəʊti:n/ *noun* a nitrogen compound which is present in and is an essential part of all living cells in the body, formed by the linking of amino acids

**protein balance** /'prəʊti:n ,bæləns/ *noun* a situation when the nitrogen intake in protein is equal to the excretion rate in the urine

**protein-bound iodine** /,prəʊti:n baʊnd 'aɪədi:n/ *noun* a compound of thyroxine and iodine

**protein-bound iodine test** /,prəʊti:n baʊnd 'aɪədi:n test/ *noun* a test to measure if the thyroid gland is producing adequate quantities of thyroxine. Abbreviation **PBI test**

**protein deficiency** /'prəʊti:n dɪ,fɪf(ə)nsi/ *noun* a lack of enough proteins in the diet

**proteinuria** /,prəʊtɪ'nɪʊəriə/ *noun* a condition in which there are proteins in the urine

**protease** /'prəʊtɪəs/ *noun* a water-soluble compound formed during hydrolytic processes such as digestion

**Proteus** /'prəʊtɪəs/ *noun* a genus of bacteria commonly found in the intestines

**prothrombin** /prəʊ'θrɒmbɪn/ *noun* a protein in blood which helps blood to coagulate and

which needs Vitamin K to be effective. Also called **Factor II**

**prothrombin time** /prəʊ'θrɒmbɪn taɪm/ *noun* the time taken in Quick test for clotting to take place

**proto-** /prəʊtəʊ/ *prefix* first or at the beginning

**proton pump** /'prəʊtɒn pʌmp/ *noun* an enzyme system within the gastric mucosa that secretes gastric acids ○ *The drug acts on the proton pump mechanism.*

**proton-pump inhibitor** /'prəʊtɒn pʌmp ɪn ,hɪbɪtə/ *noun* a drug which suppresses the final stage of gastric acid secretion by the proton pump in the gastric mucosa

**protoplasm** /'prəʊtəʊ,plæz(ə)m/ *noun* a substance like a jelly which makes up the largest part of each cell

**protozoa** /,prəʊtə'zəʊə/ plural of **protozoan**

**protozoan** /,prəʊtə'zəʊən/ *adjective* referring to protozoa

**protozoon** /,prəʊtə'zəʊn/ *noun* a tiny simple organism with a single cell (NOTE: The plural is **protozoa** or **protozoons**.)

COMMENT: Parasitic protozoa can cause several diseases, including amoebiasis, malaria and other tropical diseases.

**protuberance** /prə'tju:b(ə)rəns/ *noun* a rounded part of the body which projects above the rest

**proud flesh** /,praʊd 'fleʃ/ *noun* new vessels and young fibrous tissue which form when a wound, incision or lesion is healing

**provider** /'prə'vaɪdə/ *noun* a hospital which provides secondary care which is paid for by another body such as a PCG or social services. ♪

**purchaser**

**provitamin** /prəʊ'vɪtəmi:n/ *noun* a chemical compound which is converted to a vitamin during usual biochemical processes, e.g. the amino acid tryptophan, which is converted to niacin, and beta carotene, which is converted into vitamin A

**proximal** /'prɒksɪm(ə)l/ *adjective* near the midline, the central part of the body

**proximal convoluted tubule** /,prɒksɪm(ə)l ,kɒnvəlʊ:tɪd 'tju:bju:l/ *noun* a part of the kidney filtering system between the loop of Henle and the glomerulus

**proximal interphalangeal joint** /,prɒksɪm(ə)l ,ɪntəfə'lændʒiəl ,dʒɔɪnt/ *noun* a joint nearest the point of attachment of a finger or toe. Abbreviation **PIP**

**proximally** /'prɒksɪmli/ *adverb* further towards the centre or point of attachment. Opposite **distally**. See illustration at **ANATOMICAL TERMS** in Supplement

**Prozac** /'prəʊzæk/ a trade name for fluoxetine

**prurigo** /pruə'raɪgəʊ/ *noun* an itchy eruption of papules

**pruritus** /pruə'raɪtəs/ *noun* an irritation of the skin which makes a person want to scratch. Also called **itching**

**pruritus ani** /pruə'raɪtɪs 'eɪnəl/ *noun* itching round the anal orifice

**pruritus vulvae** /pruə'raɪtɪs 'vʌlvi:/ *noun* itching round the vulva

**pseud-** /sju:d/ *prefix* same as **pseudo-** (used before vowels)

**pseudarthrosis** /,sju:dɑ:'θrəʊsɪs/ *noun* a false joint, as when the two broken ends of a fractured bone do not bind together but heal separately (NOTE: The plural is **pseudarthroses**.)

**pseudo-** /sju:dəʊ/ *prefix* similar to something but not the same

**pseudoangina** /,sju:dəʊæ'n'dʒaɪnə/ *noun* pain in the chest, caused by worry but not indicating heart disease

**pseudocrisis** /'sju:dəʊ,kraɪsɪs/ *noun* a sudden fall in the temperature of a person with fever which does not mark the end of the fever

**pseudocroup** /,sju:dəʊ'kru:p/ *noun* same as **laryngismus**

**pseudocyesis** /,sju:dəʊsaɪ'ri:zɪs/ *noun* a condition in which a woman has the physical symptoms of pregnancy but is not pregnant. Also called **phantom pregnancy**, **pseudopregnancy**

**pseudocyst** /'sju:dəʊsɪst/ *noun* a false cyst

**pseudogynaecomastia** /,sju:dəʊ,gamɪkəʊ'mæstɪə/ *noun* enlargement of the male breast because of extra fatty tissue (NOTE: The US spelling is **pseudogynecomastia**.)

**pseudohermaphroditism** /,sju:dəʊhɜ:'mæfrədaɪtɪz(ə)m/ *noun* a condition in which a person has either ovaries or testes but external genitalia that are not clearly of either sex

**pseudohypertrophy** /,sju:dəʊhaɪ'pɜ:trəfi/ *noun* an overgrowth of fatty or fibrous tissue in a part or organ, which results in the part or organ being enlarged

**pseudomonad** /,sju:dəʊ'məʊnəd/ *noun* a rod-shaped bacterium which lives in soil or decomposing organic material and can cause disease in plants and sometimes in humans

**Pseudomonas** /,su:dəʊ'məʊnəs/ *noun* † **pseudomonad**

**pseudo-obstruction** /,sju:dəʊ əb'strʌkʃən/ *noun* a condition in which symptoms such as stomach cramps, nausea and bloating indicate a blockage in the intestines although no blockage exists

**pseudoplegia** /,sju:dəʊ'pli:dʒə/, **pseudoparalysis** /,sju:dəʊpə'ræləsɪs/ *noun* loss of muscular power in the limbs without true paralysis

**pseudopolyposis** /,sju:dəʊpɒli'pəʊsɪs/ *noun* a condition in which polyps are found in many places in the intestine, usually resulting from an earlier infection

**psilosis** /sar'ləʊsɪs/ *noun* a disease of the small intestine which prevents a person from absorbing food properly. Also called **sprue**

**psaos major** /,səʊæs 'meɪdʒə/ *noun* a muscle in the groin which flexes the hip

**psaos minor** /,səʊæs 'maɪnə/ *noun* a small muscle similar to the psaos major but not always present

**psoriasis** /sə'raɪəʊsɪs/ *noun* a common inflammatory skin disease where red patches of skin are covered with white scales

**psoriatic** /,sɔ:ri'ætɪk/ *adjective* referring to psoriasis

**psoriatic arthritis** /,sɔ:ri'ætɪk ɑ:'θraɪtɪs/ *noun* a form of psoriasis which is associated with arthritis

**psych-** /saɪk/ *prefix* same as **psycho-** (used before vowels)

**psyche** /'saɪki/ *noun* the mind

**psychedelic** /,saɪkə'delɪk/ *adjective* referring to drugs such as LSD which expand a person's consciousness

**psychiatric** /,saɪki'ætɪrɪk/ *adjective* referring to psychiatry ○ *He is undergoing psychiatric treatment.*

**psychiatric hospital** /,saɪki'ætɪrɪk ,hɒspɪt(ə)l/ *noun* a hospital which specialises in the treatment of patients with mental disorders

**psychiatrist** /sar'kaɪətrɪst/ *noun* a doctor who specialises in the diagnosis and treatment of mental and behavioural disorders

**psychiatry** /sar'kaɪətri/ *noun* a branch of medicine concerned with the diagnosis and treatment of mental and behavioural disorders

**psychic** /'saɪkɪ/, **psychical** /'saɪkɪ(ə)l/ *adjective* **1.** referring to a person who is supposedly able to guess thoughts which people have not expressed, or to foresee the future **2.** relating to or originating in the human mind

**psycho-** /saɪkəʊ/ *prefix* referring to the mind

**psychoanalysis** /,saɪkəʊə'næləsɪs/ *noun* a form of treatment for mental disorders in which a specialist and patient talk and together analyse the patient's condition and past events which may have contributed to it

**psychoanalyst** /,saɪkəʊ'æn(ə)lɪst/ *noun* a person who is trained in psychoanalysis

**psychodrama** /'saɪkəʊ,drɑ:mə/ *noun* a type of psychotherapy in which patients act out roles in dramas illustrating their emotional problems, in front of other patients

**psychodynamics** /,saɪkəʊdaɪ'næmɪks/ *noun* the study of how the forces which affect human behaviour and mental states work, especially on a subconscious level

**psychogenic** /,saɪkə'dʒenɪk/, **psychogenetic** /,saɪkəʊdʒə'netɪk/, **psychogenous** /sar'kɒdʒənəs/ *adjective* referring to an illness

which starts in the mind, rather than in a physical state

**psychogeriatrics** /,saɪkəʊdʒeri'ætrɪks/  
*noun* the study of the mental disorders of the late stages of the natural life span

**psychological** /,saɪkə'lɒdʒɪk(ə)/ *adjective* referring to psychology, or caused by a mental state

**psychological dependence** /,saɪkə'lɒdʒɪk(ə) dɪ'pendəns/  
**psychological drug dependence** /,saɪkə'lɒdʒɪk(ə) 'drʌg dɪ'pendəns/  
*noun* a state in which a person is addicted to a drug such as cannabis or alcohol but does not suffer physical effects if he or she stops taking it

**psychologist** /saɪ'kɒlədʒɪst/  
*noun* a person who specialises in the study of the mind and mental processes

**psychology** /saɪ'kɒlədʒi/  
*noun* the study of the mind and mental processes

**psychometrics** /,saɪkə'metrɪks/  
*noun* a way of measuring intelligence and personality in which the result is shown as a number on a scale

**psychomotor** /,saɪkə'məʊt/  
*adjective* referring to muscle movements caused by mental activity

**psychoneuroimmunology** /,saɪkəʊ'njuːrəʊ'ɪmjuːnɒlədʒi/  
*noun* a branch of medicine which deals with how emotions affect the immune system

**psychoneurosis** /,saɪkəʊ'njuː'rəʊsɪs/  
*noun* any of a group of mental disorders in which a person has a faulty response to the stresses of life.  $\diamond$  **neurosis** (NOTE: The plural is **psychoneuroses**.)

**psychopath** /'saɪkəpəθ/  
*noun* a person with a long-term mental disorder characterised by anti-social and often violent behaviour

**psychopathic** /,saɪkə'pæθɪk/  
*adjective* referring to psychopaths or psychopathy

**psychopathological** /,saɪkəpəθə'lɒdʒɪk(ə)/  
*adjective* referring to psychopathology

**psychopathology** /,saɪkəpə'θɒlədʒi/  
*noun* a branch of medicine concerned with the pathology of mental disorders and diseases

**psychopathy** /saɪ'kɒpəθi/  
*noun* any disease of the mind (NOTE: The plural is **psychopathies**.)

**psychopharmacology** /,saɪkəʊ'fɑ:mə'kɒlədʒi/  
*noun* the study of the actions and applications of drugs which have a powerful effect on the mind and behaviour

**psychophysiological** /,saɪkəʊ'fɪziə'lɒdʒɪk(ə)/  
*adjective* referring to psychophysiology

**psychophysiology** /,saɪkəʊ'fɪzi'vɒlədʒi/  
*noun* the physiology of the mind and its functions

**psychoses** /saɪ'kəʊsɪz/ plural of **psychosis**

**psychosexual** /,saɪkəʊ'sekʃuəl/  
*adjective* relating to the mental and emotional aspects of sexuality and sexual development

**psychosexual development** /,saɪkəʊ'sekʃuəl dɪ'veləpmənt/  
*noun* the development of human personality in stages based upon the ability to experience sexual pleasure, and the way in which sexuality plays a role in a person's life

**psychosis** /saɪ'kəʊsɪs/  
*noun* any serious mental disorder in which a person has a distorted perception of reality (NOTE: The plural is **psychoses**.)

**psychosocial** /,saɪkəʊ'səʊʃ(ə)/  
*adjective* relating to the interaction of psychological and social factors

**psychosomatic** /,saɪkəʊsə'mætɪk/  
*adjective* referring to the relationship between body and mind

**psychosurgery** /,saɪkəʊ'sɜ:dʒəri/  
*noun* brain surgery, used as a treatment for psychological disorders

**psychosurgical** /,saɪkəʊ'sɜ:dʒɪk(ə)/  
*adjective* referring to psychosurgery

**psychotherapeutic** /,saɪkəʊθerə'pjʊ:tɪk/  
*adjective* referring to psychotherapy

**psychotherapist** /,saɪkəʊθerə'pɪst/  
*noun* a person trained to give psychotherapy

**psychotherapy** /,saɪkəʊθerə'pi/  
*noun* the treatment of mental disorders by psychological methods, as when a psychotherapist encourages a person to talk about his or her problems.  $\diamond$  **therapy**

**psychotic** /saɪ'kɒtɪk/  
*adjective* referring to psychosis

**psychotropic** /,saɪkə'trɒpɪk/  
*adjective* referring to a drug such as a stimulant or sedative which affects a person's mood

**pterion** /'tɛrɪɒn/  
*noun* the point on the side of the skull where the frontal, temporal parietal and sphenoid bones meet

**pteroylglutamic acid** /,tɛrəʊaɪlglu:tæmɪk 'æsɪd/  
*noun* same as **folic acid**

**pterygium** /tə'ɪdʒɪəm/  
*noun* a degenerative condition in which a triangular growth of conjunctiva covers part of the cornea, with its apex towards the pupil

**pterygo-** /tɛrɪgəʊ/  
*suffix* the pterygoid process

**pterygoid process** /'tɛrɪgɔɪd ,prəʊsɪs/  
*noun* one of two projecting parts on the sphenoid bone

**ptosis** /'təʊsɪs/  
*noun* prolapse of an organ

**-ptosis** /təʊsɪs/  
*suffix* prolapse

**PTSD** *abbreviation* post-traumatic stress disorder

**ptyal-** /taɪəl/  
*prefix* same as **ptyalo-** (used before vowels)

**ptyalin** /'taɪəlɪn/  
*noun* an enzyme in saliva which cleanses the mouth and converts starch into sugar

**ptyalism** /'tʰaɪəlɪz(ə)m/ *noun* the production of an excessive amount of saliva

**ptyalith** /'tʰaɪəlɪθ/ *noun* same as **sialolith**

**ptyalo-** /tʰaɪələʊ/ *prefix* referring to saliva

**pubertal** /'pju:bət(ə)l/, **puberal** /'pju:bərəl/ *adjective* referring to puberty

**puberty** /'pju:bəti/ *noun* **1.** the physical and psychological changes which take place when childhood ends and adolescence and sexual maturity begin and the sex glands become active **2.** the time when these changes take place

**pubes**<sup>1</sup> /'pju:bi:z/ *noun* the part of the body just above the groin, where the pubic bones are found

**pubes**<sup>2</sup> /'pju:bi:z/ plural of **pubis**

**pubic** /'pju:bɪk/ *adjective* referring to the area near the genitals

**pubic bone** /'pju:bɪk bæʊn/ *noun* the bone in front of the pelvis. Also called **pubis**. See illustration at **UROGENITAL SYSTEM (MALE)** in Supplement

**pubic hair** /,pju:bɪk 'heə/ *noun* tough hair growing in the genital region

**pubic louse** /,pju:bɪk 'laʊs/ *noun* also called **Pediculus pubis**

**pubic symphysis** /,pju:bɪk 'sɪmfəʊsɪs/ *noun* a piece of cartilage which joins the two sections of the pubic bone. Also called **symphysis pubis**

COMMENT: In a pregnant woman, the pubic symphysis stretches to allow the pelvic girdle to expand so that there is room for the baby to pass through.

**pubiotomy** /,pju:bi:'təʊmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to divide the pubic bone during labour, in order to make the pelvis wide enough for the child to be born safely (NOTE: The plural is **pubiotomies**.)

**pubis** /'pju:bɪs/ *noun* a bone forming the front part of the pelvis. See illustration at **PELVIS** in Supplement (NOTE: The plural is **pubes**.)

**public health** /,pʌblɪk 'helθ/ *noun* the study of illness, health and disease in the community

**public health laboratory service** /,pʌblɪk 'helθ lə'bɒrət(ə)rɪ ,sɜ:vɪs/ *noun* in the UK, a former service of the NHS which detected, diagnosed and monitored suspected cases of infectious disease in a countrywide network of laboratories. Abbreviation **PHLS**

**public health medicine** /,pʌblɪk 'helθ 'med(ə)s(ə)n/ *noun* the branch of medicine concerned with health and disease in populations, with the responsibilities of monitoring health, identification of health needs, development of policies which promote health and evaluation of health services

**public health nurse** /,pʌblɪk 'helθ 'nɜ:sɪs/ *noun* a nurse such as a school nurse, health visitor or other community nurse who monitors health and works to prevent illness in community situations

**public health physician** /,pʌblɪk 'helθ fɪ 'zɪf(ə)n/ *noun* a consultant who has special training in public health medicine

**puđenda** /pju:'dendə/ plural of **puđendum**

**puđendal** /pju:'dend(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to the puđendum

**puđendal block** /pju:,dend(ə)l 'blɒk/ *noun* an operation to anaesthetise the puđendum during childbirth

**puđendum** /pju:'dendəm/ *noun* an external genital organ of a woman (NOTE: The plural is **puđenda**.)

**puđerpera** /pju:'z:p(ə)rə/ *noun* a woman who has recently given birth, or is giving birth, and whose uterus is still distended (NOTE: The plural is **puđerperae**.)

**puđerperal** /pju:'z:p(ə)rəl/ *adjective* referring to the puđerperium

**puđerpal infection** /pju:,z:p(ə)rəl ɪn 'fekʃən/, **puđerpal fever** /pju:,z:p(ə)rəl 'fi:və/ *noun* an infection of the uterus and genital tract after the birth of a baby, which is more common in women who have had a caesarean section. It causes a high fever, and occasionally sepsis, which can be fatal and was commonly so in the past. Also called **postpartum fever**

**puđerperalism** /pju:'z:p(ə)rəlɪz(ə)m/ *noun* an illness of a baby or its mother resulting from or associated with childbirth

**puđerperium** /,pju:z:'pɪəriəm/ *noun* a period of about six weeks which follows immediately after the birth of a child, during which the mother's sexual organs recover from childbirth

**puđerperous** /pju:'z:prəs/ *adjective* same as **puđerperal**

**puke** /pju:k/ *verb* same as **vomit** (*informal*)

**pull** /pʊl/ *verb* to make a muscle move in a wrong direction ○ *He pulled a muscle in his back.* □ **to pull the plug** to switch off life support (*informal*)

■ □ **to pull yourself together** to become calmer ○ *Although he was very angry he soon pulled himself together.*

**pull through** /,pʊl 'θru:z/ *verb* to recover from a serious illness (*informal*) ○ *The doctor says she is strong and should pull through.*

**pulmo-** /pʌlməʊ/, **pulmon-** /pʌlmən/ *prefix* referring to the lungs

**pulmonary** /'pʌlmən(ə)rɪ/ *adjective* referring to the lungs

**pulmonary artery** /,pʌlmən(ə)rɪ 'ɑ:təri/ *noun* one of the two arteries which take deoxygenated blood from the heart to the lungs for oxygenation. See illustration at **HEART** in Supplement

**pulmonary circulation** /,pʌlmən(ə)rɪ ,sɜ:kju'leɪf(ə)n/ *noun* the circulation of blood from the heart through the pulmonary arteries to the lungs for oxygenation and back to the heart

through the pulmonary veins. Also called **lesser circulation**

**pulmonary embolism** /,pʌlmən(ə)ri 'embəlɪz(ə)m/ *noun* a blockage of a pulmonary artery by a blood clot. Abbreviation **PE**

**pulmonary hypertension** /,pʌlmən(ə)ri ,haɪpə'tenʃən/ *noun* high blood pressure in the blood vessels supplying blood to the lungs

**pulmonary insufficiency** /,pʌlmən(ə)ri ,ɪnsə'fɪʃ(ə)nsi/, **pulmonary incompetence** /,pʌlmən(ə)ri ɪn'kɒmpɪt(ə)ns/ *noun* a condition characterised by dilatation of the main pulmonary artery and stretching of the valve ring, due to pulmonary hypertension

**pulmonary oedema** /,pʌlmən(ə)ri 'ɪdi:mə/ *noun* the collection of fluid in the lungs, as occurs in left-sided heart failure

**pulmonary stenosis** /,pʌlmən(ə)ri ste 'nəʊsɪs/ *noun* a condition in which the opening to the pulmonary artery in the right ventricle becomes narrow

**pulmonary tuberculosis** /,pʌlmən(ə)ri tʃu: ,bɜ:kju:'ləʊsɪs/ *noun* tuberculosis in the lungs, which makes the person lose weight, cough blood and have a fever

**pulmonary valve** /'pʌlmən(ə)ri vælv/ *noun* a valve at the opening of the pulmonary artery

**pulmonary vein** /'pʌlmən(ə)ri veɪn/ *noun* one of the four veins which carry oxygenated blood from the lungs back to the left atrium of the heart. See illustration at **HEART** in Supplement (NOTE: The pulmonary veins are the only veins which carry oxygenated blood.)

**pulmonectomy** /,pʌlmə'nektəmi/ *noun* same as **pneumonectomy** (NOTE: The plural is **pulmonectomies**.)

**pulp** /pʌlp/ *noun* soft tissue, especially when surrounded by hard tissue as in the inside of a tooth

**pulp cavity** /'pʌlp ,kævɪti/ *noun* the central part of a tooth containing soft tissue

**pulsation** /pʌl'seɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the action of beating regularly, e.g. the visible pulse which can be seen under the skin in some parts of the body

**pulse** /pʌls/ *noun* the regular expansion and contraction of an artery caused by the heart pumping blood through the body, which can be felt with the fingers especially where an artery is near the surface of the body, as in the wrist or neck ○ *Her pulse is very irregular.* □ **to take or feel a person's pulse** to measure a person's pulse rate by pressing on the skin above an artery with the fingers ○ *Has the patient's pulse been taken?*

**pulseless** /'pʌlsləs/ *adjective* referring to a person who has no pulse because the heart is beating very weakly

**pulse oximetry** /,pʌls ɒk'sɪmətri/ *noun* a method of measuring the oxygen content of arterial blood

**pulse point** /'pʌls pɔɪnt/ *noun* a place on the body where the pulse can be taken

**pulse pressure** /'pʌls ,preʃə/ *noun* the difference between the diastolic and systolic pressure. † **Corrigan's pulse**

**pulse rate** /'pʌls reɪt/ *noun* the number of times the pulse beats per minute

**pulsus** /'pʌlsəs/ *noun* same as **pulse**

**pulsus alternans** /,pʌlsəs 'ɔ:l'tənənz/ *noun* a pulse with a beat which is alternately strong and weak

**pulsus bigeminus** /,pʌlsəs baɪ'gɛmɪnəs/ *noun* a double pulse, with an extra ectopic beat

**pulsus paradoxus** /,pʌlsəs ,pærə'dɒksəs/ *noun* a condition in which there is a sharp fall in the pulse when the person breathes in

**pulvis** /'pʌlvɪs/ *noun* powder

**punch drunk syndrome** /,pʌntʃ 'drʌŋk ,sɪndrəʊm/ *noun* a condition affecting a person, usually a boxer, who has been hit on the head many times and develops impaired mental faculties, trembling limbs and speech disorders

**puncta** /'pʌŋktə/ plural of **punctum**

**puncta lacrimalia** /,pʌŋktə ,lækri'meɪliə/ *plural noun* small openings at the corners of the eyes through which tears drain into the nose

**punctate** /'pʌŋkteɪt/ *adjective* referring to tissue or a surface which has tiny spots, holes or dents in it

**punctum** /'pʌŋktəm/ *noun* a point (NOTE: The plural is **puncta**.)

**puncture** /'pʌŋktʃə/ *noun* a neat hole made by a sharp instrument ■ *verb* to make a hole in tissue with a sharp instrument (NOTE: **puncturing** – **punctured**)

**puncture wound** /'pʌŋktʃə wu:nd/ *noun* a wound made by a sharp instrument which makes a hole in the tissue

**pupil** /'pju:p(ə)l/ *noun* the central opening in the iris of the eye, through which light enters the eye. See illustration at **EYE** in Supplement

**pupillary** /'pju:pɪləri/ *adjective* referring to the pupil

**pupillary reaction** /,pju:pɪləri ri'ækʃən/ *noun* a reflex of the pupil of the eye which contracts when exposed to bright light. Also called **light reflex**

**purchaser** /'pɜ:tʃɪsə/ *noun* a body, usually a PCG, which commissions health care and manages the budget to pay for the service. † **provider**

**purgation** /pɜ:'geɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the use of a drug to cause a bowel movement

**purgative** /'pɜ:gətɪv/ *noun* a drug used to empty the bowels. † **laxative**

**purine** /'pjuəri:n/ *noun* 1. a nitrogen-containing substance derived from uric acid which is the parent compound of several biologically important substances 2. a derivative of purine, especially

either of the bases adenine and guanine, which are found in RNA and DNA

**Purkinje cells** /pə'kɪndʒi selz/ *plural noun* neurones in the cerebellar cortex [Described 1837. After Johannes Evangelista Purkinje (1787–1869), Professor of Physiology at Breslau, now in Poland, and then Prague, Czech Republic.]

**Purkinje fibres** /pə'kɪndʒi ˌfaɪbəz/ *plural noun* a bundle of fibres which form the atrioventricular bundle and pass from the atrioventricular node to the septum [Described 1839. After Johannes Evangelista Purkinje (1787–1869), Professor of Physiology at Breslau, now in Poland, and then Prague, Czech Republic.]

**Purkinje shift** /pə'kɪndʒi ʃɪft/ *noun* the change in colour sensitivity which takes place in the eye in low light when the eye starts using the rods in the retina because the light is too weak to stimulate the cones

**purpura** /'pɜ:pjʊərə/ *noun* a purple colouring on the skin, similar to a bruise, caused by blood disease and not by trauma

**pursestring operation** /ˌpɜ:sstɪŋ ˌɒpə'reɪʃ(ə)n/ same as **Shirodkar's operation**

**pursestring stitch** /'pɜ:sstɪŋ stɪtʃ/ *noun* same as **Shirodkar suture**

**purulent** /'pɜ:ʊələnt/ *adjective* containing or producing pus

**pus** /pʌs/ *noun* a yellow liquid composed of blood serum, pieces of dead tissue, white blood cells and the remains of bacteria, formed by the body in reaction to infection (NOTE: For other terms referring to pus, see words beginning with **py-** or **pyo-**)

**pustule** /'pʌstjʊ:l/ *noun* a small pimple filled with pus

**putrefaction** /ˌpju:trɪ'fækʃən/ *noun* the decomposition of organic substances by bacteria, making an unpleasant smell

**p.v.** *adverb* by way of the vagina. Full form **per vaginam**

**PVS** *abbreviation* persistent vegetative state

**py-** /paɪ/, **pyo-** /paɪəʊ/ *prefix* same as **pyo-** (used before vowels)

**pyaemia** /paɪ'i:miə/ *noun* invasion of blood with bacteria which then multiply and form many little abscesses in various parts of the body (NOTE: The US spelling is **pyemia**.)

**pyarthrosis** /ˌpaɪə:'θrəʊsɪs/ *noun* a condition in which a joint becomes infected with pyogenic organisms and fills with pus. Also called **acute suppurative arthritis**

**pyel-** /paɪəl/ *prefix* same as **pyelo-** (used before vowels)

**pyelitis** /ˌpaɪə'laitɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the central part of the kidney

**pyelo-** /paɪələʊ/ *prefix* referring to the pelvis of the kidney

**pyelocystitis** /ˌpaɪələʊsɪ'taɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the pelvis of the kidney and the urinary bladder

**pyelogram** /ˌpaɪələgræm/ *noun* an X-ray photograph of a kidney and the urinary tract

**pyelography** /ˌpaɪə'lɒgrəfi/ *noun* X-ray examination of a kidney after introduction of a contrast medium

**pyelolithotomy** /ˌpaɪələʊnɪ'təʊtəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to remove a stone from the pelvis of the kidney (NOTE: The plural is **pyelolithotomies**.)

**pyelonephritis** /ˌpaɪələʊnɪ'fraɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the kidney and the pelvis of the kidney

**pyeloplasty** /ˌpaɪələplæsti/ *noun* any surgical operation on the pelvis of the kidney (NOTE: The plural is **pyeloplasties**.)

**pyelotomy** /ˌpaɪə'lɒtəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to make an opening in the pelvis of the kidney (NOTE: The plural is **pyelotomies**.)

**pyg-** /pɪdʒ/, **pygo-** *prefix* relating to the buttocks

**pykno-** /pɪknəʊ/ *prefix* indicating thickness or density

**pyl-** /paɪl/, **pyle-** /paɪli/ *prefix* referring to the portal vein

**pylephlebitis** /ˌpaɪlɪflə'baitɪs/ *noun* thrombosis of the portal vein

**pylethrombosis** /ˌpaɪliθrəm'bəʊsɪs/ *noun* a condition in which blood clots are present in the portal vein or any of its branches

**pylor-** /paɪlə:r/ *prefix* same as **pyloro-** (used before vowels)

**pylorectomy** /ˌpaɪlə'rektəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to remove the pylorus and the antrum of the stomach (NOTE: The plural is **pylorectomies**.)

**pylori** /paɪ'lɔ:ri/ plural of **pylorus**

**pyloric** /paɪ'lɔ:ɪk/ *adjective* referring to the pylorus

**pyloric antrum** /paɪ,lɔ:ɪk ˈæntɾəm/ *noun* a space at the bottom of the stomach, before the pyloric sphincter

**pyloric orifice** /paɪ,lɔ:ɪk ˈɔ:rɪfɪs/ *noun* an opening where the stomach joins the duodenum

**pyloric sphincter** /paɪ,lɔ:ɪk ˈsfɪŋktə/ *noun* a muscle which surrounds the pylorus, makes it contract and separates it from the duodenum

**pyloric stenosis** /paɪ,lɔ:ɪk ste'nəʊsɪs/ *noun* a blockage of the pylorus, which prevents food from passing from the stomach into the duodenum

**pyloro-** /paɪ'lɔ:rəʊ/ *prefix* the pylorus

**pyloroplasty** /paɪ'lɔ:rəplæsti/ *noun* a surgical operation to make the pylorus larger, sometimes

combined with treatment for peptic ulcers (NOTE: The plural is **pyloroplasties**.)

**pylorospasm** /paɪ'lɔːrəspeɪz(ə)m/ *noun* a muscle spasm which closes the pylorus so that food cannot pass through into the duodenum

**pylorotomy** /,paɪlə'rɒtəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to cut into the muscle surrounding the pylorus to relieve pyloric stenosis. Also called **Ramstedt's operation** (NOTE: The plural is **pylorotomies**.)

**pylorus** /paɪ'lɔːrəs/ *noun* an opening at the bottom of the stomach leading into the duodenum (NOTE: The plural is **pylori**.)

**pyo-** /paɪəʊ/ *prefix* referring to pus

**pyocolpos** /,paɪə'kɒlpəs/ *noun* an accumulation of pus in the vagina

**pyoderma** /,paɪə'dɜːmə/ *noun* an eruption of pus in the skin

**pyoderma gangrenosum** /,paɪə'dɜːmə ,gæŋgrɪ'nəʊsəm/ *noun* a serious ulcerating disease of the skin, especially the legs, usually treated with steroid drugs

**pyogenic** /,paɪə'dʒenɪk/ *adjective* producing or forming pus

**pyometra** /,paɪə'miːtrə/ *noun* an accumulation of pus in the uterus

**pyomyositis** /,paɪəʊmaɪə'saɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of a muscle caused by staphylococci or streptococci

**pyonephrosis** /,paɪəʊnɪ'frəʊsɪs/ *noun* the distension of the kidney with pus

**pyopericarditis** /,paɪəʊpɛrɪkɑː'daɪtɪs/ *noun* an inflammation of the pericardium due to infection with staphylococci, streptococci or pneumococci

**pyopneumothorax** /,paɪəʊ,njuːməʊ 'θɔːræks/ *noun* an accumulation of pus and gas or air in the pleural cavity

**pyorrhoea** /,paɪə'riə/ *noun* discharge of pus (NOTE: The US spelling is **pyorrhea**.)

**pyosalpinx** /,paɪə'sælprɪŋks/ *noun* inflammation and formation of pus in a Fallopian tube

**pyothorax** /,paɪə'θɔːræks/ *noun* same as **empyema**

**pyr-** /paɪr/ *prefix* same as **pyro-** (used before vowels)

**pyramid** /'pɪrəməɪd/ *noun* a cone-shaped part of the body, especially a cone-shaped projection on the surface of the medulla oblongata or in the medulla of the kidney. See illustration at **KIDNEY** in Supplement

**pyramidal** /pɪ'ræməɪd(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to a pyramid

**pyramidal cell** /pɪ'ræməɪd(ə)l sel/ *noun* a cone-shaped cell in the cerebral cortex

**pyramidal system** /pɪ'ræməɪd(ə)l 'sɪstəm/, **pyramidal tract** /pɪ'ræməɪd(ə)l trækt/ *noun* a group of nerve fibres within the pyramid of the medulla oblongata in the brain. It is thought to be vital in controlling movement and speech.

**pyret-** /paɪret/, **pyreto-** *prefix* relating to heat or fever

**pyrexia** /paɪ'reksɪə/ *noun* same as **fever**

**pyridostigmine** /,pɪrɪdəʊ'stɪgmɪːn/ *noun* a drug which stops or delays the action of the enzyme cholinesterase, used to treat myasthenia gravis

**pyridoxine** /,pɪrɪ'dɒksɪn/ *noun* same as **Vitamin B<sub>6</sub>**

**pyrimidine** /pɪ'rɪmɪdɪːn/ *noun* **1.** a strong-smelling nitrogenous based compound with a six-sided ring structure that is the parent compound of several biologically important substances **2.** a derivative of pyrimidine, especially any of the bases cytosine, thymine, and uracil which are found in RNA and DNA

**pyro-** /paɪrəʊ/ *prefix* burning or fever

**pyrogen** /'paɪrədʒen/ *noun* a substance which causes a fever

**pyrogenic** /,paɪrə'dʒenɪk/ *adjective* causing a fever

**pyromania** /,paɪrəʊ'meɪniə/ *noun* an uncontrollable desire to start fires

**pyruvic acid** /paɪ,ruːvɪk 'æsɪd/ *noun* a substance formed from glycogen in the muscles when it is broken down to release energy

**pyuria** /paɪ'juəriə/ *noun* pus in the urine



# Q

**q.d.s.** *adverb* (written on prescriptions) to be taken four times a day. Full form **quater in die sumendus**

**Q fever** /'kju: ,fi:vəl/ *noun* an infectious rickettsial disease of sheep and cows caused by *Coxiella burnetii* transmitted to humans

**QRS complex** /,kju: a:r 'es ,kɒmpleks/ *noun* the deflections on an electrocardiogram, labelled Q, R, and S, which show ventricular contraction.

♢ **PQRST complex**

**q.s.** *adverb* (written on prescriptions) as much as necessary. Full form **quantum sufficiat**

**Q-T interval** /,kju: 'ti: ,ɪntəv(ə)l/, **Q-S2 interval** /,kju: es 'tu: ,ɪntəv(ə)l/ *noun* the length of the QRS complex in an electrocardiogram. ♢ **PQRST complex**

**quad** /kwɒd/ *noun* same as **quadruplet** (informal)

**quadrant** /'kwɒdrənt/ *noun* one of four sectors of the body thought of as being divided by the sagittal plane and the intertubercular plane ○ *tenderness in the right lower quadrant*

**quadratus femoris** /kwɒd'reɪtəs 'feməris/ *noun* a muscle at the top of the femur which rotates the thigh

**quadri-** /kwɒdri/ *prefix* four

**quadriceps** /'kwɒdrɪseps/, **quadriceps femoris** /,kwɒdrɪseps 'feməris/ *noun* a large muscle in the front of the thigh, which extends to the leg

**quadruplegia** /,kwɒdri'pli:dʒə/ *noun* paralysis of all four limbs, both arms and both legs

**quadruplegic** /,kwɒdri'pli:dʒɪk/ *adjective* paralysed in both arms and both legs ■ *noun* a person paralysed in both arms and both legs

**quadruple** /'kwɒdrʊp(ə)l/ *adjective* 1. consisting of four times as much 2. having four parts

**quadruplet** /'kwɒdrʊplət/ *noun* one of four babies born to a mother at the same time. Also called **quad**

**quadruple vaccine** /,kwɒdrʊp(ə)l 'væksi:n/ *noun* a vaccine which immunises against four diseases, diphtheria, whooping cough, poliomyelitis and tetanus

**qualitative** /'kwɒlɪtətɪv/ *adjective* referring to a study in which descriptive information is collected. Compare **quantitative**

**quality** /'kwɒlɪti/ *noun* 1. a characteristic of somebody or something 2. the general standard or grade of something 3. the highest or finest standard

**quality assurance** /'kwɒlɪti ə ,ʃʊərəns/ *noun* a set of criteria which are designed to check that people in an organisation maintain a high standard in the products or services they supply

**quality circle** /'kwɒlɪti ,sɜ:k(ə)l/ *noun* a group of employees from different levels of an organisation who meet regularly to discuss ways of improving the quality of its products or services

**Qualpacs** /'kwɒlpæks/, **Quality Patient Care Scale** /,kwɒlɪti ,peɪf(ə)nt 'keə ,skeɪl/ *noun* a method which guides nurses to evaluate their activity in terms of efficiency of cost, time, use of skill level and workload

**quantitative** /'kwɒntɪtətɪv/ *adjective* referring to a study in which numerical information is collected. Compare **qualitative**

**quantitative digital radiography** /,kwɒntɪtətɪv ,dɪdʒɪt(ə)l ,reɪdɪ'ɒgrəfi/ *noun* the use of digital X-ray scans to find out whether a person has a bone disease such as osteoporosis. The levels of calcium in the bones are measured, usually in the spine and hip.

**quarantine** /'kwɒrəntɪn/ *noun* 1. the situation in which a person, animal or ship just arrived in a country is kept isolated in case it carries a serious disease, to allow the disease time to develop and be detected 2. the period of such isolation to prevent the spread of disease ○ *six months' quarantine* ■ *verb* to put a person or animal in quarantine (NOTE: **quarantining – quarantined**)

**quartan fever** /'kwɔ:t(ə)n ,fi:vəl/ *noun* a form of malaria caused by *Plasmodium malariae* in which the fever returns every four days. ♢ **tertian fever**

**queasiness** /'kwi:zɪnəs/ *noun* the feeling of being about to vomit

**queasy** /'kwi:zi/ *adjective* feeling as though about to vomit

**Queckenstedt test** /'kwɛkənsted test/ *noun* a test done during a lumbar puncture in which pressure is applied to the jugular veins to see if the cerebrospinal fluid is flowing correctly [Described 1916. After Hans Heinrich George Queckenstedt (1876–1918), German physician.]

**quickening** /'kwɪkɪnɪŋ/ *noun* the first sign of life in an unborn baby, usually after about four months of pregnancy, when the mother can feel it moving in her uterus

**quiescent** /kwi'es(ə)nt/ *adjective* referring to a disease with symptoms reduced either by treatment or in the usual course of the disease

**quin** /kwɪn/ *noun* same as **quintuplet** (*informal*) (NOTE: The US term is **quint**.)

**quinine** /kwɪ'ni:n/ *noun* an alkaloid drug made from the bark of cinchona, a South American tree

**quinolone** /'kwɪnələʊn/ *noun* a drug used to treat Gram-negative and Gram-positive bacterial infections of the respiratory and urinary tracts and of the gastro-intestinal system (NOTE: Quinolone

drugs have names ending in **-oxacin**: **ciprofloxacin**)

**quinsy** /'kwɪnzi/ *noun* acute throat inflammation with an abscess round a tonsil. Also called **peritonsillar abscess**

**quint** /kwɪnt/ *noun* US same as **quintuplet**

**quintuplet** /'kwɪntjʊplət/ *noun* one of five babies born to a mother at the same time. Also called **quin**, **quint**

**quotidian** /kwəʊ'tɪdiən/ *adjective* recurring daily

**quotidian fever** /kwəʊ'tɪdiən 'fi:vəl/ *noun* a violent form of malaria in which the fever returns at daily or even shorter intervals

**quotient** /'kwəʊʃ(ə)nt/ *noun* the result when one number is divided by another

**Q wave** /'kju: weɪv/ *noun* a negative deflection at the start of the QRS complex on an electrocardiogram, going downwards

# R

**R** *symbol* roentgen

**R/** *abbreviation* prescription. Full form **recipe**

**rabid** /'ræbɪd/ *adjective* referring to rabies, or affected by rabies ○ *She was bitten by a rabid dog.*

**rabid encephalitis** /,ræbɪd enˌkefəˈlaɪtɪs/ *noun* a fatal form of encephalitis resulting from the bite of a rabid animal

**rabies** /'reɪbiːz/ *noun* a frequently fatal viral disease transmitted to humans by infected animals ○ *The hospital ordered a batch of rabies vaccine.* Also called **hydrophobia**

**racemose** /'ræsməʊs/ *adjective* referring to glands which look like a bunch of grapes

**rachi-** /reɪki/ *prefix* same as **rachio-** (*used before vowels*)

**rachides** /'reɪkɪdiːz/ *plural of rachis*

**rachio-** /reɪkiəʊl/ *prefix* referring to the spine

**rachis** /'reɪkɪs/ *noun* same as **backbone** (NOTE: The plural is **rachises** or **rachides**.)

**rachischisis** /reɪˈkɪskɪsɪs/ *noun* same as **spina bifida**

**rachitic** /rəˈkɪtɪk/ *adjective* referring to rickets

**rachitis** /rəˈkæɪtɪs/ *noun* same as **rickets**

**rad** /ræd/ *noun* a unit of measurement of absorbed radiation dose. † **becquerel**, **gray** (NOTE: **Gray** is now used to mean one hundred rads.)

**radial** /'reɪdiəl/ *adjective* **1.** referring to something which branches **2.** referring to the radius bone in the arm

**radial artery** /'reɪdiəl ɑːtəri/ *noun* an artery which branches from the brachial artery, running near the radius, from the elbow to the palm of the hand

**radial nerve** /'reɪdiəl nɜːv/ *noun* the main motor nerve in the arm, running down the back of the upper arm and the outer side of the forearm

**radial pulse** /'reɪdiəl pʌls/ *noun* the main pulse in the wrist, taken near the outer edge of the forearm just above the wrist

**radial recurrent** /,reɪdiəl rɪˈkʌrənt/ *noun* an artery in the arm which forms a loop beside the brachial artery

**radial reflex** /,reɪdiəl ˈrɪːfleks/ *noun* a jerk made by the forearm when the insertion in the radius of one of the muscles, the brachioradialis, is hit

**radiant** /'reɪdiənt/ *adjective* **1.** lit with a bright or glowing light **2.** referring to light, heat or other energy sent out in the form of rays or waves **3.** sending out light, heat or other energy in the form of rays or waves

**radiation** /,reɪdiˈeɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* waves of energy which are given off by some substances, especially radioactive substances

**radiation burn** /,reɪdiˈeɪʃ(ə)n bɜːn/ *noun* a burn on the skin caused by exposure to large amounts of radiation

**radiation sickness** /,reɪdiˈeɪʃ(ə)n ˌsɪknəs/ *noun* an illness caused by exposure to radiation from radioactive substances

**radiation treatment** /,reɪdiˈeɪʃ(ə)n ˌtɪːtmənt/ *noun* same as **radiotherapy**

**radical** /'rædɪk(ə)l/ *adjective* aiming to deal with the root of a problem, taking thorough action to remove the source of a disease rather than treat its symptoms

**radical mastectomy** /,rædɪk(ə)l mæ ˈstektəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to remove a breast and the lymph nodes and muscles associated with it

**radical mastoidectomy** /,rædɪk(ə)l ˌmæstɔɪ ˈdektəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to remove all of the mastoid process

**radical treatment** /,rædɪk(ə)l ˈtɪːtmənt/ *noun* treatment which aims at complete eradication of a disease

**radicle** /'rædɪk(ə)l/ *noun* a small root or vein

**radicular** /rəˈdɪkjʊlə/ *adjective* referring to a radicle

**radiculitis** /rəˌdɪkjʊˈlaɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of a radicle of a cranial or spinal nerve

**radio-** /reɪdiəʊ/ *prefix* **1.** referring to radiation **2.** referring to radioactive substances **3.** referring to the radius in the arm

**radioactive** /,reɪdiəʊˈæktɪv/ *adjective* with a nucleus which disintegrates and gives off energy in the form of radiation which can pass through other substances

**radioactive isotope** /,reɪdiəʊæktɪv 'aɪsətəʊp/ *noun* an isotope which sends out radiation, used in radiotherapy and scanning

**radioactivity** /,reɪdiəʊæktɪvɪti/ *noun* energy in the form of radiation emitted by a radioactive substance

**radiobiologist** /,reɪdiəʊbɪ'ɒlədʒɪst/ *noun* a doctor who specialises in radiobiology

**radiobiology** /,reɪdiəʊbɪ'ɒlədʒi/ *noun* the scientific study of radiation and its effects on living things

**radiocarpal joint** /,reɪdiəʊ'kɑ:p(ə)l ,dʒɔɪnt/ *noun* the joint where the radius articulates with the scaphoid, one of the carpal bones. Also called **wrist joint**

**radiodermatitis** /,reɪdiəʊ,dɜ:mə'taɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the skin caused by exposure to radiation

**radiograph** /'reɪdiəgrɑ:f/ *noun* an image produced on film or another sensitive surface when radiation such as X-rays or gamma rays passes through an object ■ *verb* to make a radiograph of something, especially a part of the body

**radiographer** /,reɪdi'ɒgrəf/ *noun* 1. a person specially trained to operate a machine to take X-ray photographs or radiographs. Also called **diagnostic radiographer** 2. a person specially trained to use X-rays or radioactive isotopes in the treatment of patients. Also called **therapeutic radiographer**

**radiography** /,reɪdi'ɒgrəfi/ *noun* the work of examining the internal parts of the body by taking X-ray photographs

**radioimmunoassay** /,reɪdiəʊ,ɪmjʊnəʊ 'æseɪ/ *noun* the use of radioactive tracers to investigate the presence of antibodies in blood samples, in order to measure the antibodies themselves or the amount of particular substances, such as hormones, in the blood

**radioisotope** /,reɪdiəʊ'aɪsətəʊp/ *noun* an isotope of a chemical element which is radioactive

**radiologist** /,reɪdi'ɒlədʒɪst/ *noun* a doctor who specialises in radiology

**radiology** /,reɪdi'ɒlədʒi/ *noun* the use of radiation to diagnose disorders, e.g. through the use of X-rays or radioactive tracers, or to treat diseases such as cancer

**radiomimetic** /,reɪdiəʊmɪ'metɪk/ *adjective* referring to a drug or chemical which produces similar effects to those of radiation, e.g. the nitrogen mustard group of chemicals used in chemotherapy

**radionuclide** /,reɪdiəʊ'nju:klaɪd/ *noun* an element which gives out radiation

**radionuclide scan** /,reɪdiəʊ'nju:klaɪd ,skæn/ *noun* a scan, especially of the brain, where radionuclides are put in compounds which are concentrated in particular parts of the body

**radio-opaque** /,reɪdiəʊ əʊ'peɪk/ *adjective* absorbing and blocking radiant energy, e.g. X-rays

**radio-opaque dye** /,reɪdiəʊ əʊ,peɪk 'daɪ/ *noun* a liquid which appears on an X-ray, and which is introduced into soft organs such as the kidney so that they show up clearly on an X-ray photograph

**radiopaque** /,reɪdiəʊ'peɪk/ *adjective* same as **radio-opaque**

**radioscopy** /,reɪdi'ɒskəpi/ *noun* an examination of an X-ray photograph on a fluorescent screen

**radiosensitive** /,reɪdiəʊ'sensɪtɪv/ *adjective* referring to a cancer cell which is sensitive to radiation and can be treated by radiotherapy

**radiotherapist** /,reɪdiəʊ'θerəpɪst/ *noun* a doctor who specialises in radiotherapy

**radiotherapy** /,reɪdiəʊ'θerəpi/ *noun* the treatment of diseases by exposing the affected part to radioactive rays such as X-rays or gamma rays

**radium** /'reɪdiəm/ *noun* a radioactive metallic element (NOTE: The chemical symbol is **Ra**.)

**radius** /'reɪdiəs/ *noun* the shorter and outer of the two bones in the forearm between the elbow and the wrist. See illustration at **HAND** in Supplement (NOTE: The plural is **radii**. The other bone in the forearm is the **ulna**.)

**radix** /'reɪdɪks/ *noun* same as **root** (NOTE: The plural is **radices** or **radixes**.)

**radon** /'reɪdɒn/ *noun* a radioactive gas, formed from the radioactive decay of radium, and used in capsules called radon seeds to treat cancers inside the body (NOTE: The chemical symbol is **Rn**.)

**rale** /rɑ:l/ *noun* same as **crepitation**

**Ramstedt's operation** /'rɑ:mstets ɒpə ,reɪf(ə)n/ *noun* same as **pylorotomy** [Described 1912. After Wilhelm Conrad Ramstedt (1867–1963), German surgeon.]

**ramus** /'reɪməs/ *noun* 1. a branch of a nerve, artery or vein 2. the ascending part on each side of the mandible (NOTE: The plural is **rami**.)

**R & D** *abbreviation* research and development  
**randomised** /'rændəmaɪzɪd/, **randomized** *adjective* involving subjects which have been selected without a prearranged plan and in no particular pattern or order

**ranitidine** /'ræ'nɪtɪdɪ:n/ *noun* a drug which reduces the amount of acid released by the stomach. It is used to treat peptic ulcers and gastritis.

**ranula** /'rænjʊlə/ *noun* a small cyst under the tongue, on the floor of the mouth, which forms when a salivary duct is blocked

**Ranvier** /'rɑ:nvi,eɪ/ ♦ **node of Ranvier**

**rape** /reɪp/ *noun* the crime of forcing somebody to have sexual intercourse ■ *verb* to force somebody to have sexual intercourse

**raphe** /'reɪfi/ *noun* a long thin fold which looks like a seam, along a midline such as on the dorsal face of the tongue

**rapid eye movement sleep** /,ræpɪd 'aɪ ,mʊvmənt ,sli:p/ *noun* same as **REM sleep**

**rapport** /ræ'pɔ:/ *noun* an emotional bond or friendly relationship between people ○ *a psychiatrist who quickly establishes a rapport with his patients*

**refraction** /,rɛəri'fækʃən/ *noun* a condition in which bone tissue becomes more porous and less dense because of a lack of calcium

**rash** /ræʃ/ *noun* a mass of small spots which stays on the skin for a period of time, and then disappears

**raspatory** /'ræspət(ə)ri/ *noun* a surgical instrument like a file, which is used to scrape the surface of a bone

**rate** /reɪt/ *noun* **1.** the amount or proportion of something compared with something else **2.** the number of times something happens in a set time ○ *The heart was beating at a rate of only 59 per minute.*

**ratio** /'reɪʃiəʊ/ *noun* a number which shows a proportion or which is the result of one number divided by another ○ *An IQ is the ratio of the person's mental age to his or her chronological age.*

**Raynaud's disease** /'reɪnəʊz dɪ:zi:z/, **Raynaud's phenomenon** /'reɪnəʊz fi,nɒmɪnən/ *noun* a condition with various possible causes in which the blood supply to the fingers and toes is restricted and they become cold, white and numb. Also called **dead man's fingers**, **vasospasm** [Described 1862. After Maurice Raynaud (1834–81), French physician.]

**RBC** *abbreviation* red blood cell

**RCGP** *abbreviation* Royal College of General Practitioners

**RCN** *abbreviation* Royal College of Nursing

**RCOG** *abbreviation* Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists

**RCP** *abbreviation* Royal College of Physicians

**RCPsych** /,ɑ: si: 'saɪk/ *abbreviation* Royal College of Psychiatrists

**RCS** *abbreviation* Royal College of Surgeons

**RCT** *abbreviation* randomised controlled trial

**reaction** /ri'ækʃən/ *noun* **1.** an action which takes place as a direct result of something which has happened earlier ○ *A rash appeared as a reaction to the penicillin injection.* **2.** the particular response of someone to a test

**reactionary** /ri'ækʃən(ə)ri/ *adjective* same as **reactive**

**reactionary haemorrhage** /ri,ækʃən(ə)ri 'hem(ə)rɪdʒ/ *noun* bleeding which follows an operation

**reactivate** /ri'æktɪveɪt/ *verb* to make something active again ○ *His general physical weakness has reactivated the dormant virus.*

**reactive** /ri'æktɪv/ *adjective* taking place as a reaction to something else

**reagent** /ri'eɪdʒ(ə)nt/ *noun* a chemical substance which reacts with another substance, especially one which is used to detect the presence of the second substance

**real-time imaging** /,ri:əl taɪm 'ɪmɪdʒɪŋ/ *noun* the use of ultrasound information to produce a series of images of a process or changing object almost instantly

**rear** /riə/, **rear end** /riə end/ *noun* same as **buttock** (*informal*)

**recalcitrant** /ri'kælsɪtrənt/ *adjective* not responding to treatment ○ *a recalcitrant condition*

**recall** /ri'kɔ:l/ *noun* the act of remembering something from the past ■ *verb* /ri'kɔ:l/ to remember something which happened in the past

**receptor** /ri'septə/, **receptor cell** /ri'septə sel/ *noun* a nerve ending or cell which senses a change such as cold or heat in the surrounding environment or in the body and reacts to it by sending an impulse to the central nervous system

**recess** /ri'ses/ *noun* a hollow part in an organ

**recessive** /ri'sesɪv/ *adjective* (*of an allele*) having the characteristic that leads to the trait which it controls being suppressed by the presence of the corresponding dominant allele. Compare **dominant**

**recipient** /ri'sɪpiənt/ *noun* a person who receives something such as a transplant or a blood transfusion from a donor

**recombinant DNA** /ri,kɒmbɪnənt di: en 'eɪ/ *noun* DNA extracted from two or more different sources and joined together to form a single molecule or fragment. This technology is used to produce molecules and organisms with new properties.

**recover** /ri'kʌvə/ *verb* to get better after an illness, operation or accident ○ *She recovered from her concussion in a few days.* ○ *It will take him weeks to recover from the accident.* (NOTE: You recover from an illness.)

**recovery** /ri'kʌv(ə)ri/ *noun* the process of returning to health after being ill or injured

**recovery position** /ri'kʌv(ə)ri pə,zɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a position in which someone is lying face downwards, with one knee and one arm bent forwards and the face turned to one side

**recovery room** /ri'kʌv(ə)ri ru:m/ *noun* a room in a hospital where patients are cared for after they have had a surgical operation and are recovering from the effects of the anaesthetic. *Abbreviation* **RR**

**recreational drug** /ˌrɛkrɪ'eɪʃ(ə)n(ə)l drʌɡ/ *noun* a drug that is taken for pleasure rather than because of medical need

**recrudescence** /ˌrɪ:kru:'des(ə)ns/ *noun* the reappearance of symptoms of a disease which seemed to have got better

**rect-** /rɛkt/ *prefix* same as **recto-** (used before vowels)

**rectal** /'rɛkt(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to the rectum

**rectal fissure** /ˌrɛkt(ə)l 'fɪʃə/ *noun* a crack in the wall of the anal canal

**rectal prolapse** /ˌrɛkt(ə)l 'prəʊləps/ *noun* a condition in which part of the rectum moves downwards and passes through the anus

**recto-** /rɛktəʊ/ *prefix* referring to the rectum

**rectocele** /'rɛktəʊsi:l/ *noun* a condition associated with prolapse of the uterus, in which the rectum protrudes into the vagina. Also called **proctocele**

**rectopexy** /'rɛktəʊpeksi/ *noun* a surgical operation to attach a rectum which has prolapsed

**rectoscope** /'rɛktəʊskəʊp/ *noun* an instrument for looking into the rectum

**rectosigmoid** /ˌrɛktəʊ'sɪgmɔɪd/ *noun* the part of the large intestine where the sigmoid colon joins the rectum

**rectosigmoidectomy** /ˌrɛktəʊ'sɪgmɔɪ'dektəmi/ *noun* the surgical removal of the sigmoid colon and the rectum

**rectovaginal** /ˌrɛktəʊvə'dʒaɪn(ə)l/ *adjective* relating to both the rectum and the vagina

**rectovaginal examination** /ˌrɛktəʊvə'dʒaɪn(ə)l ɪg,zæmɪ'neɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* an examination of the rectum and vagina

**rectovesical** /ˌrɛktəʊ'vesɪk(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to the rectum and the bladder

**rectum** /'rɛktəm/ *noun* the end part of the large intestine leading from the sigmoid colon to the anus. See illustration at **DIGESTIVE SYSTEM** in Supplement, **UROGENITAL SYSTEM (MALE)** in Supplement (NOTE: For other terms referring to the rectum, see words beginning with **proct-**, **procto-**)

**rectus** /'rɛktəs/ *noun* a straight muscle (NOTE: The plural is **recti**.)

**rectus abdominis** /ˌrɛktəs æb'dɒmɪnɪs/ *noun* a long straight muscle which runs down the front of the abdomen

**rectus femoris** /ˌrɛktəs 'fembɔɪs/ *noun* a flexor muscle in the front of the thigh, one of the four parts of the quadriceps femoris. ◊ **medial**

**recumbent** /rɪ'kʌmbənt/ *adjective* lying down

**recuperation** /rɪ,kʊ:pə'reɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the process of getting better after an illness ◯ *His recuperation will take several months.*

**recurrent** /rɪ'kʌrənt/ *adjective* **1.** occurring in the same way many times **2.** referring to a vein, artery or nerve which forms a loop

**recurrent abortion** /rɪ,kʌrənt ə'bo:ʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a condition in which a woman has abortions with one pregnancy after another

**recurrent fever** /rɪ,kʌrənt 'fi:və/ *noun* a fever like malaria which returns at regular intervals

**red blood cell** /ˌred 'blʌd ,sel/ *noun* a blood cell which contains haemoglobin and carries oxygen to the tissues and takes carbon dioxide from them. Abbreviation **RBC**. Also called **erythrocyte**

**Red Crescent** /ˌred 'krez(ə)nt/ *noun* in Islamic countries, an international organisation dedicated to the medical care of the sick and wounded in wars and natural disasters (NOTE: It is known as the Red Cross elsewhere.)

**Red Cross** /ˌred 'krɒs/ *noun* an international organisation dedicated to the medical care of the sick and wounded in wars and natural disasters (NOTE: It is known as the Red Crescent in Islamic countries.)

**Redivac drain** /'redɪvæk dreɪn/, **Redivac drainage tube** /ˌredɪvæk 'dreɪnɪdʒ ,tju:b/ *trademark* a tube which drains fluid away from the inside of a wound into a bottle, used mainly after operations on the abdomen

**reducible** /rɪ'dju:sɪb(ə)l/ *adjective* capable of being reduced

**reducible hernia** /rɪ'dju:sɪb(ə)l 'hɜ:niə/ *noun* a hernia where the organ can be pushed back into place without an operation

**reduction** /rɪ'dʌkʃən/ *noun* the action of putting a hernia, a dislocated joint or a broken bone back into the correct position

**reduction division** /rɪ'dʌkʃən dɪˌvɪʒ(ə)n/ *noun* same as **meiosis**

**refer** /rɪ'fɜ:z/ *verb* **1.** to mention or to talk about something ◯ *The doctor referred to the patient's history of sinus problems.* **2.** to pass on information about a patient to someone else ◯ *They referred her case to a gynaecologist.* **3.** to send someone to another doctor, usually a specialist, for advice or treatment ◯ *She was referred to a cardiologist.*

**referral** /rɪ'fɜ:zəl/ *noun* the act of sending someone to a specialist ◯ *She asked for a referral to a gynaecologist.*

**referred pain** /rɪˌfɜ:zɪd 'peɪn/ *noun* same as **synalgia**

**reflection** /rɪ'flekʃən/ *noun* **1.** the image of somebody or something which is seen in a mirror or still water **2.** the process of reflecting something, especially light, sound or heat **3.** careful thought **4.** a situation in which an anatomical structure bends back upon itself

**reflective practice** /rɪˌflektɪv 'præktɪs/ *noun* the process of improving professional skills by

monitoring your own actions while they are being carried out, and by then later evaluating them by talking or writing about them and asking other professionals to give their assessments of you

**reflex** /'ri:fleks/, **reflex action** /'ri:fleks ,ækʃən/ *noun* a physiological reaction without any conscious thought involved, e.g. a knee jerk or a sneeze, which happens in response to a particular stimulus

**reflex arc** /'ri:fleks a:k/ *noun* the basic system of a reflex action, where a receptor is linked to a motor neurone which in turn is linked to an effector muscle

**reflexologist** /,ri:flək'slədʒɪst/ *noun* a person specialising in reflexology

**reflexology** /,ri:flək'slədʒi/ *noun* a treatment to relieve tension by massaging the soles of the feet and thereby stimulating the nerves and increasing the blood supply

**reflux** /'ri:flʌks/ *noun* a situation where a fluid flows in the opposite direction to its usual flow ○ *The valves in the veins prevent blood reflux.* ♢ **vesicoureteric reflux**

**reflux oesophagitis** /,ri:flʌks i:zɒfə 'dʒaɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the oesophagus caused by regurgitation of acid juices from the stomach

**refraction** /rɪ'frækʃən/ *noun* a change of direction of light rays as they enter a medium such as the eye

**refractory** /rɪ'frækt(ə)ri/ *adjective* difficult or impossible to treat, or not responding to treatment

**refractory period** /rɪ,frækt(ə)ri 'pɪəriəd/ *noun* a short space of time after the ventricles of the heart have contracted, when they cannot contract again

**refrigeration** /rɪ,frɪdʒə'reɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the process of making something cold

**regeneration** /rɪ,ɡenə'reɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the process where tissue that has been destroyed grows again

**regimen** /'redʒɪmən/ *noun* a fixed course of treatment, e.g. a course of drugs or a special diet

**regional** /'ri:dʒ(ə)nəl/ *adjective* in a particular region, referring to a particular region

**register** /'redʒɪstə/ *noun* an official list ■ *verb* to write a name on an official list, especially the official list of patients treated by a GP or dentist, or the list of people with a particular disease ○ *He is a registered heroin addict.* ○ *They went to register the birth with the Registrar of Births, Marriages and Deaths.* □ **to register with someone** to put your name on someone's official list, especially the list of patients treated by a GP or dentist ○ *Before registering with the GP, she asked if she could visit him.* ○ *All practising doctors are registered with the General Medical Council.*

**registered midwife** /,redʒɪstəd 'mɪdwaɪf/ *noun* a qualified midwife who is registered to practise

**Registered Nurse** /,redʒɪstəd 'nɜ:s/, **Registered General Nurse** /,redʒɪstəd 'dʒen(ə)rəl ,nɜ:s/, **Registered Theatre Nurse** /,redʒɪstəd 'θiətə ,nɜ:s/ *noun* a nurse who has been registered by the UKCC. Abbreviation **RN, RGN, RTN**

**registrar** /,redʒɪ'strɑ:/ *noun* **1.** a qualified doctor or surgeon in a hospital who supervises house officers **2.** a person who registers something officially

**registration** /,redʒɪ'streɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the act of registering ○ *A doctor cannot practise without registration by the General Medical Council.*

**regression** /rɪ'ɡreʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a stage where symptoms of a disease are disappearing and the person is getting better

**regurgitation** /rɪ,ɡɜ:dʒɪ'teɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the process of flowing back in the opposite direction to the usual flow, especially of bringing up partly digested food from the stomach into the mouth

**rehabilitation** /,ri:əbɪlɪ'teɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the process of making someone fit to work or to lead an ordinary life again

**rehydration** /,ri:har'dreɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the act of giving water or liquid to someone who has dehydrated

**Reiter's syndrome** /'raɪtəz ,sɪndrəʊm/, **Reiter's disease** /'raɪtəz dɪ,zɪ:z/ *noun* an illness which may be sexually transmitted and affects mainly men, causing arthritis, urethritis and conjunctivitis at the same time [Described 1916. After Hans Conrad Reiter (1881–1969), German bacteriologist and hygienist.]

**reject** /rɪ'dʒekt/ *verb* **1.** to refuse to accept something **2.** to be unable to tolerate tissue or an organ transplanted from another body because it is immunologically incompatible ○ *The new heart was rejected by the body.* ○ *They gave the patient drugs to prevent the transplant being rejected.* **3.** to be unable to keep food down and vomit it up again

**rejection** /rɪ'dʒekʃən/ *noun* the act of rejecting tissue ○ *The patient was given drugs to reduce the possibility of tissue rejection.*

**relapse** /'ri:læps, rɪ'læps/ *noun* a situation in which someone gets worse after seeming to be getting better, or where a disease appears again after seeming to be cured ■ *verb* to return to an earlier and worse state, especially to get ill again after getting better ○ *She relapsed into a coma.*

**relapsing fever** /rɪ'læpsɪŋ ,fi:vəl/ *noun* a disease caused by a bacterium, where attacks of fever recur from time to time

**relative density** /,relatɪv 'densɪti/ *noun* the ratio of the density of a substance to the density of a standard substance at the same temperature and

pressure. For liquids and solids the standard substance is usually water, and for gases, it is air.

**relative risk** /,relətɪv 'rɪsk/ *noun* a measure of the likelihood of developing a disease for people who are exposed to a particular risk, relative to people who are not exposed to the same risk. For example, the relative risk of myocardial infarction for oral contraceptive users is 1.6 times that of non-users. Abbreviation **RR**

**relaxant** /rɪ'læksənt/ *noun* a substance which relieves strain ■ *adjective* relieving strain

**relaxation** /,rɪ:læk'seɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the process of reducing strain in a muscle

**relaxation therapy** /,rɪ:læk'seɪʃ(ə)n θerəpi/ *noun* a treatment in which people are encouraged to relax their muscles to reduce stress

**relaxin** /rɪ'læksɪn/ *noun* a hormone which is secreted by the placenta to make the cervix relax and open fully in the final stages of pregnancy before childbirth

**release** /rɪ'li:s/ *noun* the process of allowing something to go out ○ *the slow release of the drug into the bloodstream* ■ *verb* to let something out ○ *Hormones are released into the body by glands.*

**releasing factor** /rɪ'li:stɪŋ ,fæktə/ *noun* a substance produced in the hypothalamus which encourages the release of hormones

**releasing hormone** /rɪ'li:stɪŋ ,hɔ:məʊn/ *noun* a hormone secreted by the hypothalamus which makes the pituitary gland release particular hormones. Also called **hypothalamic hormone**

**rem** /rem/ *noun* a unit for measuring amounts of radiation, equal to the effect that one roentgen of X-rays or gamma-rays would produce in a human being. It is used in radiation protection and monitoring.

**REM** /rem/ *abbreviation* rapid eye movement. †

**REM sleep**

**remission** /rɪ'mɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a period when an illness or fever is less severe

**re. mist.** /,rɪ: 'mɪst/ *adverb* (on a prescription) repeat the same mixture. Full form **repetatur mistura**

**REM sleep** /'rem sli:p/ *noun* a stage of sleep which happens several times each night and is characterised by dreaming, rapid eye movement and increased pulse rate and brain activity. Also called **rapid eye movement sleep**

COMMENT: During REM sleep, a person dreams, breathes lightly and has a raised blood pressure and an increased rate of heartbeat. The eyes may be half-open, and the sleeper may make facial movements.

**ren-** /rɪ:n/ *prefix* same as **reno-** (used before vowels)

**renal** /'rɪ:n(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to the kidneys

**renal artery** /,rɪ:n(ə)l 'ɑ:təri/ *noun* one of two arteries running from the abdominal aorta to the kidneys

**renal calculus** /,rɪ:n(ə)l 'kælkjələs/ *noun* a small hard mineral mass called a stone in the kidney

**renal capsule** /,rɪ:n(ə)l 'kæpsju:l/ *noun* same as **fibrous capsule**

**renal colic** /,rɪ:n(ə)l 'kɒlɪk/ *noun* a sudden pain caused by a kidney stone or stones in the ureter

**renal corpuscle** /,rɪ:n(ə)l 'kɔ:pəs(ə)l/ *noun* part of a nephron in the cortex of a kidney. Also called **Malpighian body**

**renal cortex** /,rɪ:n(ə)l 'kɔ:tɪks/ *noun* the outer covering of the kidney, immediately beneath the capsule. See illustration at **KIDNEY** in Supplement

**renal dialysis** /,rɪ:n(ə)l daɪ'æləsɪs/ *noun* a method of artificially maintaining the chemical balance of the blood when the kidneys have failed, or the process of using this method. Also called **dialysis**

**renal hypertension** /,rɪ:n(ə)l ,haɪpə'tenʃən/ *noun* high blood pressure linked to kidney disease

**renal medulla** /,rɪ:n(ə)l me'dʌlə/ *noun* the inner part of a kidney containing no glomeruli. See illustration at **KIDNEY** in Supplement

**renal pelvis** /,rɪ:n(ə)l 'pelvɪs/ *noun* the upper and wider part of the ureter leading from the kidney where urine is collected before passing down the ureter into the bladder. Also called **pelvis of the kidney**. See illustration at **KIDNEY** in Supplement

**renal transplant** /,rɪ:n(ə)l 'trænsplɑ:nt/ *noun* a kidney transplant

**renal tubule** /,rɪ:n(ə)l 'tju:bju:l/ *noun* a tiny tube which is part of a nephron. Also called **uriniferous tubule**

**reni-** /rɪ:ni/ *prefix* referring to the kidneys

**renin** /'rɪ:nɪn/ *noun* an enzyme secreted by the kidney to prevent loss of sodium, and which also affects blood pressure

**rennin** /'renɪn/ *noun* an enzyme which makes milk coagulate in the stomach, so as to slow down the passage of the milk through the digestive system

**reno-** /rɪ:nəʊ/ *prefix* referring to the kidneys

**renovascular system** /,rɪ:nəʊ'væskjələ ,sɪstəm/ *noun* the blood vessels associated with the kidney

**reorganisation** /rɪ:,ɔ:gənə'zeɪʃ(ə)n/, **reorganization** *noun* 1. a change in the way something is organised or done 2. the process of changing the way something is organised or done 3. an occasion when a business or organisation is given a completely new structure

**reovirus** /'rɪ:əʊ,vairəs/ *noun* a virus which affects both the intestine and the respiratory system, but does not cause serious illness. Compare **echovirus**

**rep** /rep/ *adverb* (written on a prescription) repeat. Full form **repetatur**



**repetitive strain injury** /rɪˌpetɪtɪv 'streɪn ɪndʒəri/, **repetitive stress injury** /rɪˌpetɪtɪv 'stres ɪndʒəri/ *noun* pain, usually in a limb, felt by someone who performs the same movement many times over a period, e.g. when operating a computer terminal or playing a musical instrument. Abbreviation **RSI**

**replantation** /ˌrɪːplɑːn'teɪf(ə)n/ *noun* a surgical technique which reattaches parts of the body which have been accidentally cut or torn off

**replication** /ˌreplɪ'keɪf(ə)n/ *noun* the process in the division of a cell, where the DNA makes copies of itself

**repolarisation** /rɪːpəʊləraɪ'zeɪf(ə)n/, **repolarization** *noun* the restoration of the usual electrical polarity of a nerve or muscle cell membrane after reversal of its polarity while a nerve impulse or muscle contraction travelled along it

**reportable diseases** /rɪˌpɔːtəb(ə)l dɪ'ziːzɪz/ *plural noun* diseases such as asbestosis, hepatitis or anthrax which may be caused by working conditions or may infect other workers and must be reported to the District Health Authority

**repositor** /rɪ'pɒzɪtə/ *noun* a surgical instrument used to push a prolapsed organ back into its usual position

**repression** /rɪ'preʃ(ə)n/ *noun* (*in psychiatry*) the act of ignoring or forgetting feelings or thoughts which might be unpleasant

**reproduction** /ˌrɪːprə'dʌkʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the process of making new living beings by existing ones, e.g. producing children or derived other descendants

**reproductive** /ˌrɪːprə'dʌktɪv/ *adjective* referring to reproduction

**reproductive organs** /ˌrɪːprə'dʌktɪv ɔːgənz/ *plural noun* parts of the bodies of men and women which are involved in the conception and development of a fetus

**reproductive system** /ˌrɪːprə'dʌktɪv ɪstəm/ *noun* the arrangement of organs and ducts in the bodies of men and women which produce spermatozoa or ova

COMMENT: In the human male, the testes produce the spermatozoa which pass through the vasa efferentia and the vasa deferentia where they receive liquid from the seminal vesicles, then out of the body through the urethra and penis on ejaculation. In the female, an ovum, produced by one of the two ovaries, passes through the Fallopian tube where it is fertilised by a spermatozoon from the male. The fertilised ovum moves down into the uterus where it develops into an embryo.

**RES** *abbreviation* reticuloendothelial system

**research and development** /rɪˌsɜːtʃ ən dɪ'veləpmənt/ *noun* the process by which pharmaceutical companies find new drugs and test their suitability. Abbreviation **R & D**

**resection** /rɪ'sekʃən/ *noun* the surgical removal of any part of the body

**resection of the prostate** /rɪˌsekʃən əv ðə 'prɒsteɪt/ *noun* same as **transurethral prostaticectomy**

**resectoscope** /rɪ'sektəskəʊp/ *noun* a surgical instrument used to carry out a transurethral resection

**reservoir** /'rezəvwaː/ *noun* **1.** a cavity in an organ or group of tissues in which fluids collect and are stored **2.** an organism in which a parasite lives and develops without damaging it, but from which the parasite then passes to another species which is damaged by it **3.** a part of a machine or piece of equipment where liquid is stored for it to use

**resident** /'rezɪd(ə)nt/ *adjective* living in a place

**residential** /ˌrezɪ'denʃəl/ *adjective* **1.** living in a hospital **2.** living at home

**residential care** /ˌrezɪ'denʃəl ˌkeə/ *noun* the care of patients either in a hospital or at home, but not as outpatients

**residual** /rɪ'zɪdʒuəl/ *adjective* remaining, which is left behind

**residual air** /rɪˌzɪdʒuəl 'eə/, **residual volume** /rɪˌzɪdʒuəl 'vɒljʊːm/ *noun* air left in the lungs after a person has breathed out as much air as possible

**residual urine** /rɪˌzɪdʒuəl 'jʊərɪn/ *noun* urine left in the bladder after a person has passed as much urine as possible

**resistance** /rɪ'zɪstəns/ *noun* **1.** the ability of a person not to get a disease **2.** the ability of bacteria or a virus to remain unaffected by a drug ○ *The bacteria have developed a resistance to certain antibiotics.* **3.** opposition to a force

**resolution** /ˌrezə'luːʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the amount of detail which can be seen in a microscope or on a computer monitor

**resonance** /'rez(ə)nəns/ *noun* a sound made by a hollow part of the body when hit. ♪ **magnetic**

**resorption** /rɪ'sɔːpʃən/ *noun* the process of absorbing a substance produced by the body back into the body

**respiration** /ˌrespə'reɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the act of taking air into the lungs and blowing it out again through the mouth or nose. Also called **breathing**

**respiration rate** /ˌrespə'reɪʃ(ə)n ˌreɪt/ *noun* the number of times a person breathes per minute

**respirator** /'respəreɪtə/ *noun* **1.** same as **ventilator** **2.** a mask worn to prevent someone breathing harmful gas or fumes

**respiratory** /rɪ'spɪrət(ə)rɪ/ *adjective* referring to breathing

**respiratory centre** /rɪˌspɪrət(ə)rɪ 'sentə/ *noun* a nerve centre in the brain which regulates the breathing

**respiratory distress syndrome** /rɪˌspɪrət(ə)ri dɪ'stɪres ˌsɪndrəʊm/ *noun* a condition of newborn babies, and especially common in premature babies, in which the lungs do not expand properly, due to lack of surfactant. Also called **hyaline membrane disease**

**respiratory failure** /rɪˌspɪrət(ə)ri 'feɪljə/ *noun* failure of the lungs to oxygenate the blood correctly

**respiratory quotient** /rɪˌspɪrət(ə)ri 'kwɔʊfj(ə)nt/ *noun* the ratio of the amount of carbon dioxide taken into the alveoli of the lungs from the blood to the amount of oxygen which the alveoli take from the air. Abbreviation **RQ**

**respiratory syncytial virus** /rɪˌspɪrət(ə)ri sɪn'sɪtʃiəl ˌvaɪrəs/ *noun* a virus which causes infections of the nose and throat in adults, but serious bronchiolitis in children. Abbreviation **RSV**

**respiratory system** /rɪˌspɪrət(ə)ri ˌsɪstəm/, **respiratory tract** /rɪˌspɪrət(ə)ri trækɪt/ *noun* the series of organs and passages which take air into the lungs, and exchange oxygen for carbon dioxide

**respite care** /'respait keə/ *noun* temporary care provided to people with disabilities, serious conditions or terminal illness, so that their families can have a rest from the daily routine

**response** /rɪˌspɒns/ *noun* a reaction by an organ, tissue or a person to an external stimulus

**responsibility** /rɪˌspɒnsɪ'bɪləti/ *noun* **1.** somebody or something which a person or organisation has a duty to take care of ○ *Checking the drip is your responsibility.* **2.** the blame for something bad which has happened ○ *She has taken full responsibility for the mix-up.* **3.** the position of having to explain to somebody why something was done ○ *Whose responsibility is it to talk to the family?*

**rest** /rest/ *noun* a period of time spent relaxing or sleeping ○ *What you need is a good night's rest.* ■ *verb* **1.** to spend time relaxing or sleeping **2.** to use a body part less for a period of time ○ *Rest your arm for a week.*

**restenosis** /ˌrɪːstə'nəʊsɪs/ *noun* an occasion when something becomes narrow again, e.g. a coronary artery which has previously been widened by balloon angioplasty (NOTE: The plural is **restenoses**.)

**resuscitation** /rɪˌsʌsɪ'teɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the act of reviving someone who seems to be dead, by making him or her breathe again and restarting the heart

**retardation** /ˌrɪ:tɑː'deɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the process of making something slower

**retching** /ˌretʃɪŋ/ *noun* the fact of attempting to vomit without being able to do so

**rete** /'ri:tɪ/ *noun* a network of veins, arteries or nerve fibres in the body. ♢ **reticular** (NOTE: The plural is **retia**.)

**retention** /rɪˌtenʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the act of not letting out something, especially a fluid, which is usually released from the body, e.g. holding back urine in the bladder

**retention cyst** /rɪˌtenʃən sɪst/ *noun* a cyst which is formed when a duct from a gland is blocked

**retention of urine** /rɪˌtenʃ(ə)n əv 'juəri:n/ *noun* a condition in which passing urine is difficult or impossible because the urethra is blocked or because the prostate gland is enlarged

**rete testis** /ˌri:tɪː 'testɪs/ *noun* a network of channels in the testis which take the sperm to the epididymis

**retia** /ˌriːʃiə/ plural of **rete**

**reticular** /rɪˌtɪkjʊlə/ *adjective* relating to or in the form of a network

**reticular fibres** /rɪˌtɪkjʊlə 'fɑːbəs/ *plural noun* fibres in connective tissue which support, e.g., organs or blood vessels

**reticulocyte** /rɪˌtɪkjʊləʊsaɪt/ *noun* a red blood cell which has not yet fully developed

**reticulocytosis** /rɪˌtɪkjʊləʊsaɪ'təʊsɪs/ *noun* a condition in which the number of reticulocytes in the blood increases unusually

**reticuloendothelial cell** /rɪˌtɪkjʊləʊˌendəʊ 'θiːliəl sel/ *noun* a phagocytic cell in the reticuloendothelial system

**reticuloendothelial system** /rɪˌtɪkjʊləʊˌendəʊˌθiːliəl ˌsɪstəm/ *noun* a series of phagocytic cells in the body, found especially in bone marrow, lymph nodes, liver and spleen, which attack and destroy bacteria and form antibodies. Abbreviation **RES**

**retin-** /retɪn/ *prefix* same as **retino-** (used before vowels)

**retina** /'retɪnə/ *noun* the inside layer of the eye which is sensitive to light. ♢ **detached retina.** See illustration at **EYE** in Supplement (NOTE: The plural is **retinae**.)

**retinal** /'retɪn(ə)/ *adjective* referring to the retina

**retinal artery** /'retɪn(ə)l ˌɑːtəri/ *noun* the only artery of the retina, which accompanies the optic nerve

**retinal detachment** /ˌretɪn(ə)l dɪ'tætʃmənt/ *noun* a condition in which the retina is partly detached from the choroid

**retinitis** /ˌretɪˈnaɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the retina

**retinitis pigmentosa** /ˌretɪˈnaɪtɪs ˌpɪgmənt 'təʊsə/ *noun* a hereditary condition in which inflammation of the retina can result in blindness

**retino-** /retɪnəʊ/ *prefix* referring to the retina

**retinol** /ˈrɛtɪnɒl/ *noun* a vitamin found in liver, vegetables, eggs and cod liver oil which is essential for good vision. Also called **Vitamin A**

**retinopathy** /ˌrɛtɪˈnɒpəθi/ *noun* any disease of the retina

**retinoscope** /ˈrɛtɪnɒskəʊp/ *noun* an instrument with various lenses, used to measure the refraction of the eye

**retraction** /rɪˈtrækʃən/ *noun* the fact of moving backwards or becoming shorter ○ *There is retraction of the overlying skin.*

**retraction ring** /rɪˈtrækʃən rɪŋ/ *noun* a groove round the uterus, separating its upper and lower parts, which, in obstructed labour, prevents the baby from moving forward as expected into the cervical canal. Also called **Bandl's ring**

**retractor** /rɪˈtræktə/ *noun* a surgical instrument which pulls and holds back the edge of the incision in an operation

**retro-** /rɛtrəʊ/ *prefix* at the back, behind

**retrobulbar** /ˌrɛtrəʊˈbʌlbə/ *adjective* behind the eyeball

**retrobulbar neuritis** /ˌrɛtrəʊbʌlbə njuːˈraɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the optic nerve which makes objects appear blurred. Also called **optic neuritis**

**retroflexion** /ˌrɛtrəʊˈfleksj(ə)n/ *noun* the fact of being bent backwards

**retrograde** /ˈrɛtrəʊɡreɪd/ *adjective* going backwards or deteriorating, getting worse

**retrograde pyelography** /ˌrɛtrəʊɡreɪd ˌpaɪəˈlɒɡrəfi/ *noun* an X-ray examination of the kidney where a catheter is passed into the kidney and an opaque liquid is injected directly into it

**retrolental fibroplasia** /ˌrɛtrəʊlənt(ə)l ˌfaɪbrəʊˈpleɪziə/ *noun* a condition in which fibrous tissue develops behind the lens of the eye, resulting in blindness

**retro-ocular** /ˌrɛtrəʊ ˈɒkjʊlə/ *adjective* at the back of the eye

**retroperitoneal** /ˌrɛtrəʊˌpɛrɪtəˈniːəl/ *adjective* at the back of the peritoneum

**retroperitoneal space** /ˌrɛtrəʊˌpɛrɪtəʊˌniːəl ˈspeɪs/ *noun* the area between the posterior parietal peritoneum and the posterior abdominal wall, containing the kidneys, adrenal glands, duodenum, ureters and pancreas

**retropharyngeal** /ˌrɛtrəʊˌfærɪnˈdʒiːəl/ *adjective* at the back of the pharynx

**retropubic** /ˌrɛtrəʊˈpjuːbɪk/ *adjective* at the back of the pubis

**retrospection** /ˌrɛtrəʊˈspekʃən/ *noun* the act of recalling what happened in the past

**retrospective** /ˌrɛtrəʊˈspektɪv/ *adjective* applying to the past, tracing what has happened already to selected people

**retroversion** /ˌrɛtrəʊˈvɜːʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the fact of sloping backwards □ **retroversion of the uterus** Same as **retroverted uterus**

**retroverted uterus** /ˌrɛtrəʊvɜːtɪd ˈjuːtərəs/ *noun* a condition in which the uterus slopes backwards away from its usual position. Also called **retroversion of the uterus, tipped womb**

**retrovirus** /ˈrɛtrəʊvaɪrəs/ *noun* a virus whose genetic material contains RNA from which DNA is synthesised (NOTE: The AIDS virus and many carcinogenic viruses are retroviruses.)

**revascularisation** /rɪˌvæskjʊləreɪˈzeɪʃ(ə)n/, **revascularization** *noun* **1.** the act of restoring an adequate blood supply to an organ or tissue, especially in a surgical operation using a blood vessel graft **2.** the condition of having an adequate blood supply restored

**reverse isolation** /rɪˌvɜːs ˌaɪsəˈleɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* same as **protective isolation**

**revision** /rɪˈvɪʒ(ə)n/ *noun* an examination of a surgical operation after it has been carried out ○ *a revision of a radical mastoidectomy*

**Reye's syndrome** /ˈraɪz ˌsɪndrəʊm/ *noun* a form of brain disease affecting young children, which is possibly due to viral infection and has a suspected link with aspirin

**RGN** *abbreviation* Registered General Nurse

**Rh** *abbreviation* rhesus

**rhabdomyosarcoma** /ˌræbdəʊˌmɑːrəʊsɑːˈkəʊmə/ *noun* a malignant tumour of striated muscle tissue. It occurs mostly in children.

**rhabdovirus** /ˈræbdəʊvaɪrəs/ *noun* any of a group of viruses containing RNA, one of which causes rabies

**rhachio-** /reɪkiəʊ/ *prefix* referring to the spine

**Rh disease** /ɑːr ˈeɪtʃ dɪˌziːz/ *noun* same as **rhesus factor disease**

**rheo-** /riːəʊ/ *prefix* **1.** relating to the flow of liquids **2.** relating to the flow of electrical current

**rhesus baby** /ˈriːsəs ˌbeɪbi/ *noun* a baby with erythroblastosis fetalis

**rhesus factor** /ˈriːsəs ˌfæktə/ *noun* an antigen in red blood cells, which is an element in blood grouping. Also called **Rh factor**

**rhesus factor disease** /ˈriːsəs ˌfæktə dɪˌziːz/ *noun* a disease which occurs when the blood of a fetus has a different rhesus factor from that of the mother. Also called **Rh disease**

**rheumatic** /ruːˈmætɪk/ *adjective* referring to rheumatism

**rheumatic fever** /ruːˈmætɪk ˈfiːvəl/ *noun* a collagen disease of young people and children, caused by haemolytic streptococci, where the joints and also the valves and lining of the heart become inflamed. Also called **acute rheumatism**

COMMENT: Rheumatic fever often follows another streptococcal infection such as a

strep throat or tonsillitis. Symptoms are high fever, pains in the joints, which become red, formation of nodules on the ends of bones and difficulty in breathing. Although recovery can be complete, rheumatic fever can recur and damage the heart permanently.

**rheumatism** /'ru:mætɪz(ə)m/ *noun* pains and stiffness in the joints and muscles (*informal*) ○ *She has rheumatism in her hips.* ○ *He complained of rheumatism in the knees.*

**rheumatoid** /'ru:mætɔɪd/ *adjective* relating to rheumatism

**rheumatoid arthritis** /,ru:mætɔɪd ɑ:'θraɪtɪs/ *noun* a general painful disabling collagen disease affecting any joint, but especially the hands, feet and hips, making them swollen and inflamed. ♪ **osteoarthritis**

**rheumatologist** /,ru:mə'tɒlədʒɪst/ *noun* a doctor who specialises in rheumatology

**rheumatology** /,ru:mə'tɒlədʒi/ *noun* a branch of medicine dealing with rheumatic disease of muscles and joints

**Rh factor** /,ɑ: 'eɪf ˌfæktə/ *noun* same as **rhesus factor**

**rhin-** /raɪn/ *prefix* same as **rhino-** (*used before vowels*)

**rhinitis** /raɪ'næɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the mucous membrane in the nose, which makes the nose run, caused, e.g., by a virus infection or an allergic reaction to dust or flowers

**rhino-** /raɪnəʊ/ *prefix* referring to the nose

**rhinology** /raɪ'nɒlədʒi/ *noun* a branch of medicine dealing with diseases of the nose and the nasal passages

**rhinophyma** /,raɪnəʊ'fæɪmə/ *noun* a condition caused by rosacea, in which the nose becomes permanently red and swollen

**rhinoplasty** /'raɪnəʊplæsti/ *noun* plastic surgery to correct the appearance of the nose

**rhinorrhoea** /,raɪnəʊ'rɪə/ *noun* a watery discharge from the nose

**rhinoscope** /'raɪnəʊskəʊp/ *noun* an instrument for examining the inside of the nose

**rhinoscopy** /raɪ'nɒskəpi/ *noun* an examination of the inside of the nose

**rhinosinusitis** /,raɪnəʊ,sæɪnə'saɪtɪs/ *noun* swelling of the lining of the nose and paranasal sinuses, as a result of either a viral infection or allergic rhinitis. It is usually treated with antibiotics, antihistamines or steroids.

**rhinovirus** /'raɪnəʊ,væɪrəs/ *noun* a group of viruses containing RNA, which cause infection of the nose and include the virus which causes the common cold

**rhiz-** /raɪz/, **rhizo-** /raɪzəʊ/ *prefix* referring to a root

**rhizotomy** /raɪ'zɒtəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to cut or divide the roots of a nerve to relieve severe pain

**Rh-negative** /,ɑ: eɪf ˌ'negətɪv/ *adjective* who does not have the rhesus factor in his or her blood

**rhodopsin** /rəʊ'dɒpsɪn/ *noun* a light-sensitive purple pigment in the rods of the retina, which makes it possible to see in dim light. Also called **visual purple**

**rhomboid** /'rɒmbɔɪd/ *noun* one of two muscles in the top part of the back which move the shoulder blades

**rhonchus** /'rɒŋkəs/ *noun* an unusual sound in the chest, heard through a stethoscope, caused by a partial blockage in the bronchi (NOTE: The plural is **rhonchi**.)

**Rh-positive** /,ɑ: eɪf ˌ'pɒzɪtɪv/ *adjective* who has the rhesus factor in his or her blood

**rhythm method** /'rɪð(ə)m ,meθəd/ *noun* a method of birth control where sexual intercourse should take place only during the safe periods when conception is least likely to occur, i.e. at the beginning and at the end of the menstrual cycle

COMMENT: This method is not as safe or reliable as other methods of contraception because the time when ovulation takes place cannot be accurately calculated if a woman does not have regular periods.

**rib** /rɪb/ *noun* one of twenty-four curved bones which protect the chest (NOTE: For other terms referring to the ribs, see words beginning with **cost-**, **costo-**.)

**ribavirin** /'raɪbə,væɪrɪn/ *noun* a synthetic drug which helps to prevent the synthesis of viral DNA and RNA, used in the treatment of viral diseases

**rib cage** /'rɪb keɪdʒ/ *noun* the ribs and the space enclosed by them

**riboflavine** /,raɪbəʊ'fleɪvɪn/ same as **Vitamin B<sub>2</sub>**

**ribonuclease** /,raɪbəʊ'nju:kliəz/ *noun* an enzyme which breaks down RNA

**ribonucleic acid** /,raɪbəʊnju:kli:ɪk 'æsɪd/ *noun* one of the nucleic acids in the nucleus of all living cells, which takes coded information from DNA and translates it into specific enzymes and proteins. ♪ **DNA**. Abbreviation **RNA**

**ribosome** /'raɪbəʊsəʊm/ *noun* a tiny particle in a cell, containing RNA and protein, where protein is synthesised

**ricewater stools** /'raɪswɔ:tə stu:ɪlz/ *plural noun* watery faeces that are typically passed by people who have cholera

**ricin** /'raɪsɪn/ *noun* a highly toxic albumin found in the seeds of the castor oil plant

**rickets** /'rɪkɪts/ *noun* a disease of children, where the bones are soft and do not develop properly due to lack of Vitamin D. Also called **rachitis**

**ridge** /rɪdʒ/ *noun* a long raised part on the surface of a bone or organ

**rifampicin** /rɪf'æmpɪsɪn/ *noun* an antibiotic which works by interfering with RNA synthesis in the infecting bacteria, used in the treatment of tuberculosis, leprosy and other bacterial infections

**right-left shunt** /,raɪt left 'ʃʌnt/ *noun* a malformation in the heart, allowing blood to flow from the pulmonary artery to the aorta

**rigidity** /rɪ'dʒɪdɪti/ *noun* the fact of being rigid, bent or not able to be moved. † **spasticity**

**rigor** /'rɪgə/ *noun* an attack of shivering, often with fever

**rigor mortis** /,rɪgə 'mɔ:ɪtɪs/ *noun* a condition in which the muscles of a dead body become stiff after death and then become relaxed again

COMMENT: Rigor mortis starts about eight hours after death, and begins to disappear several hours later. Environment and temperature play a large part in the timing.

**rima** /'raɪmə/ *noun* a narrow crack or cleft

**rima glottidis** /,ri:mə 'glɒtɪdɪs/ *noun* a space between the vocal cords

**ring** /rɪŋ/ *noun* a circle of tissue, or tissue or muscle shaped like a circle

**ring block** /'rɪŋ blɒk/ *noun* the process of inserting local anaesthetic all the way round a digit, e.g. a finger, in order to perform a procedure distal to the block.

**Ringer's solution** /'rɪŋəz sə,lʊ:f(ə)n/ *noun* a solution of inorganic salts which is used both to treat burns and cuts and to keep cells, tissues or organs alive outside the body

**ring finger** /'rɪŋ ,fɪŋɡə/ *noun* the third finger, the finger between the little finger and the middle finger

**ringworm** /'rɪŋwɜ:m/ *noun* any of various infections of the skin by a fungus, in which the infection spreads out in a circle from a central point. It is very contagious and difficult to get rid of. Also called **tinea**

**Rinne's test** /'rɪnɪz test/ *noun* a hearing test in which a tuning fork is hit and its handle placed near the ear, to test for air conduction, and then on the mastoid process, to test for bone conduction. It is then possible to determine the type of lesion which exists by finding if the sound is heard for a longer period by air or by bone conduction. [Described 1855. After Friedrich Heinrich Rinne (1819–68), otologist at Göttingen, Germany.]

**ripple bed** /'rɪp(ə)l bed/ *noun* a type of bed with an air-filled mattress divided into sections, in which the pressure is continuously being changed so that the body can be massaged and bedsores can be avoided

**risk** /rɪsk/ *noun* the possibility of something harmful happening ○ *There is a risk of a cholera epidemic.* ○ *There is no risk of the disease*

*spreading to other members of the family.* □ **at risk** in danger of being harmed ○ *Businessmen are particularly at risk of having a heart attack.* ■ **verb** to do something which may possibly cause harm or have bad results ○ *If the patient is not moved to an isolation ward, all the patients and staff in the hospital risk catching the disease.*

**risk factor** /'rɪsk ,fæktə/ *noun* a characteristic that increases a person's likelihood of getting a particular disease ○ *Smoking is a risk factor for lung cancer.* ○ *Obesity is a risk factor for diabetes.*

**risus sardonius** /,raɪsəs sɑ:'dɒnɪkəs/ *noun* a twisted smile which is a symptom of tetanus

**rite of passage** /,raɪt əv 'pæsɪdʒ/ *noun* a ceremony which shows that somebody is moving from one stage of their life to another, e.g. from childhood to puberty or from unmarried to married life

**RM** *abbreviation* Registered Midwife

**RMN** *abbreviation* Registered Mental Nurse

**RNA** *abbreviation* Registered Nurse

**RNA** *abbreviation* ribonucleic acid

**RNMH** *abbreviation* Registered Nurse for the Mentally Handicapped

**Rocky Mountain spotted fever** /,rɒki ,maʊntɪn ,spɒtɪd 'fi:vəl/ *noun* a type of typhus caused by *Rickettsia rickettsii*, transmitted to humans by ticks

**rod** /rɒd/ *noun 1. a stick shape with rounded ends ○ *Some bacteria are shaped like rods or are rod-shaped.* 2. one of two types of light-sensitive cell in the retina of the eye. Rods are sensitive to dim light, but not to colour. † **cone***

**rodent ulcer** /,rɒd(ə)nt 'ʌlsə/ *noun* a malignant tumour on the face

**roentgen** /'rɒntɡən/ *noun* a unit of radiation used to measure the exposure of someone or something to X-rays or gamma rays. Symbol **R** [After Wilhelm Konrad von Röntgen (1845–1923), physicist at Strasbourg, Geissen, Würzburg and Munich, and then Director of the physics laboratory at Würzburg where he discovered X-rays in 1895. Nobel prize for Physics 1901.]

**role** /rəʊl/ *noun 1. the usual or expected function of somebody or something in a particular process or event ○ *the role of haemoglobin in blood clotting* 2. the characteristic or expected pattern of behaviour of a particular member of a social group ○ *the eldest child's role in the family**

**role playing** /'rəʊl ,pleɪɪŋ/ *noun* the act of pretending to be somebody else in a situation, so that you have to imagine how that person feels and thinks. It usually involves several people. It is used in many training exercises and psychiatric evaluations.

**rolled bandage** /,rəʊld 'bændɪdʒ/, **roller bandage** /'rəʊlə ,bændɪdʒ/ *noun* a bandage in

the form of a long strip of cloth which is rolled up from one or both ends

**Romberg's sign** /'rɒmbɜːgz saɪn/ *noun* a swaying of the body or falling when standing with the feet close together and the eyes closed, the result of loss of the joint position sense [Described 1846. After Moritz Heinrich Romberg (1795–1873), German physician and pioneer neurologist.]

**rongeur** /rɒŋ'gɜː/ *noun* a strong surgical instrument like a pair of pliers, used for cutting bone

**root** /ru:t/ *noun* **1.** a point from which a part of the body grows ○ *root of hair* or *hair root* ○ *root of nerve* or *nerve root* **2.** part of a tooth which is connected to a socket in the jaw ► also called **radix**

**root canal** /'ru:t kə,næl/ *noun* a canal in the root of a tooth through which the nerves and blood vessels pass

**rooting reflex** /'ru:tɪŋ ,rɪ:fleks/ *noun* the instinct in new babies to turn their heads towards a touch on the cheek or mouth, which is important for breastfeeding

**Roper, Logan and Tierney model** /,rɒpə ,ləʊgən ən 'tɪəri ,mɒd(ə)l/ *noun* an important model of nursing developed in the UK in 1980. Various factors such as necessary daily tasks, lifespan and health status are used to assess the relative independence of an individual, which the nurse will help them to increase.

**Rorschach test** /'rɔːʃɑːk test/ *noun* the ink blot test, used in psychological diagnosis, where someone is shown a series of blots of ink on paper and is asked to say what each blot reminds him or her of. The answers give information about the person's psychological state. [Described 1921. After Hermann Rorschach (1884–1922), German-born psychiatrist who worked in Bern, Switzerland.]

**rosacea** /rəʊ'zeɪʃə/ *noun* a common skin disease seen from middle age affecting the face, and especially the nose, which becomes red because of enlarged blood vessels. The cause is not known. Also called **acne rosacea** (NOTE: Despite its alternative name, rosacea is not a type of acne.)

**rosea** /'rəʊziə/ ► **pityriasis**

**rostrum** /'rɒstrəm/ *noun* a projecting part of a bone or structure shaped like a beak (NOTE: The plural is **rostra**.)

**rotation** /rəʊ'teɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the act of moving in a circle. See illustration at **ANATOMICAL TERMS** in Supplement

**rotator** /rəʊ'teɪtə/ *noun* a muscle which makes a limb rotate

**Rothera's test** /'rɒðərəz test/ *noun* a test to see if acetone is present in urine, a sign of ketosis which is a complication of diabetes mellitus [After

Arthur Cecil Hamel Rothera (1880–1915), biochemist in Melbourne, Australia.]

**Roth spot** /'rəʊt spɒt/ *noun* a pale spot which sometimes occurs on the retina of a person who has leukaemia or some other diseases [After Moritz Roth (1839–1915), Swiss pathologist and physician.]

**rotunda** /rəʊ'tʌndə/ ► **fenestra**

**roughage** /'rʌfɪdʒ/ *noun* same as **dietary fibre**

**round** /raʊnd/ *adjective* shaped like a circle ■ *noun* a regular visit

**round ligament** /'raʊnd ,lɪgəmənt/ *noun* a band of muscle which stretches from the uterus to the labia

**round window** /'raʊnd ,wɪndəʊ/ *noun* a round opening between the middle ear and the cochlea, and closed by a membrane. Also called **fenestra rotunda**. See illustration at **EAR** in Supplement

**Rovsing's sign** /'rɒvsɪŋz saɪn/ *noun* pain in the right iliac fossa when the left iliac fossa is pressed, which is a sign of acute appendicitis [Described 1907. After Niels Thorkild Rovsing (1862–1927), Professor of Surgery at Copenhagen, Denmark.]

**Royal College of General Practitioners** /,rɔɪəl ,kɒlɪdʒ əv 'dʒən(ə)rəl/ *noun* a professional association which represents family doctors. Abbreviation **RCGP**

**Royal College of Nursing** /,rɔɪəl ,kɒlɪdʒ əv 'nɜːsɪŋ/ *noun* a professional association which represents nurses. Abbreviation **RCN**

**Roy's model** /'rɔɪz ,mɒd(ə)l/ *noun* a model for nursing developed in the US in the 1970s. It describes a person's health as being a state of successful positive adaptation to all those stimuli from the environment which could interfere with their basic need satisfaction. Illness results from an inability to adapt to such stimuli, so nurses should help patients to overcome this.

**RQ** *abbreviation* respiratory quotient

**RR** *abbreviation* **1.** recovery room **2.** relative risk

**-rrhage** /rɪdʒ/, **-rrhagia** /'reɪdʒə/ *suffix* referring to an unusual flow or discharge of blood

**-rrhaphy** /rə'fɪ/ *suffix* referring to surgical sewing or suturing

**-rrhexis** /reksɪs/ *suffix* referring to splitting or rupture

**-rrhoea** /rɪə/ *suffix* referring to an unusual flow or discharge of fluid from an organ

**RSCN** *abbreviation* Registered Sick Children's Nurse

**RSI** *abbreviation* repetitive strain injury

**RSV** *abbreviation* respiratory syncytial virus

**RTN** *abbreviation* Registered Theatre Nurse

**rubeifacient** /,ruːbɪ'feɪʃ(ə)nt/ *noun* a substance which makes the skin warm, and pink or red ■ *adjective* causing the skin to become red

**rubella** /ru:'belə/ *noun* a common infectious viral disease of children with mild fever, swollen lymph nodes and rash. Also called **German measles**

COMMENT: Rubella can cause stillbirth or malformation of an unborn baby if the mother catches the disease while pregnant. One component of the MMR vaccine immunises against rubella.

**rubeola** /ru:'bi:ələ/ *noun* same as **measles**

**rubor** /'ru:bə/ *noun* redness of the skin or tissue

**Ruffini corpuscles** /ru:'fi:ni ,kɔ:pʌs(ə)lzl/, **Ruffini nerve endings** /ru:'fi:ni nɜ:v ,endɪŋz/ *plural noun* branching nerve endings in the skin, which are thought to be sensitive to heat

**ruqa** /'ru:gə/ *noun* a fold or ridge, especially in a mucous membrane such as the lining of the stomach (NOTE: The plural is **rugae**.)

**rumination** /,ru:mɪ'neɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* **1.** a condition in which someone has constant irrational thoughts which they cannot control **2.** the regurgitation of food from the stomach which is then swallowed again

**run-down** /,rʌn 'daʊn/ *adjective* exhausted and unwell

**running** /'rʌnɪŋ/ *adjective* from which liquid is flowing ○ *running eyes*

**running sore** /,rʌnɪŋ 'sɔ:/ *noun* a sore which is discharging pus

**runs** /rʌnz/ *noun the **runs** same as **diarrhoea** (*informal*) ○ *I've got the runs again.* (NOTE: Takes a singular or plural verb.)*

**rupture** /'rʌptʃə/ *noun* **1.** the breaking or tearing of an organ such as the appendix **2.** same as **hernia** ■ *verb* to break or tear something

**ruptured spleen** /,rʌptʃəd 'spli:n/ *noun* a spleen which has been torn by piercing or by a blow

**Russell traction** /'rʌs(ə)l ,trækʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a type of traction with weights and slings used to straighten a femur which has been fractured [Described 1924. After R. Hamilton Russell (1860–1933), Australian surgeon.]

**Ryle's tube** /'raɪlz ,tju:zb/ *noun* a thin tube which is passed into the stomach through either the nose or mouth, used to pump out the contents of the stomach or to introduce a barium meal in the stomach [Described 1921. After John Alfred Ryle (1882–1950), physician at London, Cambridge and Oxford, UK]

# S

**Sabin vaccine** /'seɪbɪn ,væksɪːn/ *noun* an oral vaccine against poliomyelitis, consisting of weak live polio virus. Compare **Salk vaccine** (NOTE: This is the vaccine used in the UK) [Developed 1955. After Albert Bruce Sabin (1906–93), Russian-born New York bacteriologist.]

**sac** /sæk/ *noun* a part of the body shaped like a bag

**saccades** /sæ'keɪdɪz/ *plural noun* controlled rapid movements of the eyes made when a person is changing the direction in which they are focusing, e.g. when they are reading

**sacchar-** /sækə/ *prefix* same as **saccharo-** (used before vowels)

**saccharide** /'sækərəɪd/ *noun* a form of carbohydrate

**saccharin** /'sækərɪn/ *noun* a white crystalline substance, used in place of sugar because, although it is nearly 500 times sweeter than sugar, it contains no carbohydrates

**saccharine** /'sækərəɪn/ *adjective* relating to, resembling or containing sugar

**saccharo-** /sækərəʊ/ *prefix* referring to sugar

**saccule** /'sækju:l/, **sacculus** /'sækjʊləs/ *noun* the smaller of two sacs in the vestibule of the inner ear which is part of the mechanism which relates information about the position of the head in space

**sacral** /'seɪkrəl/ *adjective* referring to the sacrum

**sacral foramen** /,seɪkrəl fə'reɪmən/ *noun* one of the openings in the sacrum through which the sacral nerves pass. See illustration at **PELVIS** in Supplement (NOTE: The plural is **sacral foramina**.)

**sacral nerve** /'seɪkrəl nɜ:v/ *noun* one of the nerves which branch from the spinal cord in the sacrum and govern the legs, the arms and the genital area

**sacral plexus** /,seɪkrəl 'pleksəs/ *noun* a group of nerves inside the pelvis near the sacrum which lead to nerves in the buttocks, back of the thigh and lower leg and foot

**sacral vertebrae** /,seɪkrəl 'vɜ:tɪbri:/ *plural noun* the five vertebrae in the lower part of the spine which are fused together to form the sacrum

**sacro-** /seɪkrəʊ/ *prefix* referring to the sacrum

**sacrococcygeal** /,seɪkrəkək'ʃi:dʒiəl/ *adjective* referring to the sacrum and the coccyx

**sacroiliac** /,seɪkrəʊ'ɪliæk/ *adjective* referring to the sacrum and the ilium

**sacroiliac joint** /,seɪkrəʊ'ɪliæk ,dʒɔɪnt/ *noun* a joint where the sacrum joins the ilium

**sacroiliitis** /,seɪkrəʊɪli'atɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the sacroiliac joint

**sacrum** /'seɪkrəm/ *noun* a flat triangular bone, formed of five sacral vertebrae fused together, located between the lumbar vertebrae and the coccyx. It articulates with the coccyx and also with the hip bones. See illustration at **PELVIS** in Supplement (NOTE: The plural is **sacra**.)

**SAD** *abbreviation* seasonal affective disorder

**saddle joint** /'sæd(ə)l dʒɔɪnt/ *noun* a synovial joint where one element is concave and the other convex, like the joint between the thumb and the wrist

**sadism** /'seɪdɪz(ə)m/ *noun* a sexual condition in which a person finds sexual pleasure in hurting others

**sadist** /'seɪdɪst/ *noun* a person whose sexual urge is linked to sadism

**sadistic** /sə'dɪstɪk/ *adjective* referring to sadism. Compare **masochism**

**SADS** *abbreviation* seasonal affective disorder syndrome

**safe** /seɪf/ *adjective* **1.** not likely to cause harm  
○ *Is it safe to use this drug on someone who is diabetic?* **2.** in a protected place or situation and not likely to be harmed or lost  
○ *Keep the drugs in a safe place.* ○ *He's safe in hospital being looked after by the doctors and nurses.* (NOTE: **safer – safest**)

**safe dose** /'seɪf dəʊs/ *noun* the amount of a drug which can be given without being harmful

**safe sex** /,seɪf 'seks/ *noun* the use of measures such as a contraceptive sheath and having only one sexual partner to reduce the possibility of catching a sexually transmitted disease

**sagittal** /'sædʒɪt(ə)l/ *adjective* going from the front of the body to the back, dividing it into right and left



**sagittal plane** /,sædʒɪt(ə)l 'pleɪn/ *noun* the division of the body along the midline, at right angles to the coronal plane, dividing the body into right and left parts. Also called **median plane**. See illustration at **ANATOMICAL TERMS** in Supplement

**sagittal section** /,sædʒɪt(ə)l 'sekʃən/ *noun* any section or cut through the body, going from the front to the back along the length of the body

**sagittal suture** /,sædʒɪt(ə)l 'su:tʃəl/ *noun* a joint along the top of the head where the two parietal bones are fused

**St Vitus's dance** /sənt 'vaɪtəsɪz 'dɑ:ns/ *noun* a former name for Sydenham's chorea

**salbutamol** /sæl'bju:təməʊl/ *noun* a drug which relaxes and dilates the bronchi, used in the relief of asthma, emphysema and chronic bronchitis

**salicylate** /sə'lɪsɪleɪt/ *noun* one of various pain-killing substances derived from salicylic acid, e.g. aspirin

**salicylic acid** /,sælsɪlɪk 'æsɪd/ *noun* a white antiseptic substance which destroys bacteria and fungi and which is used in ointments to treat corns, warts and other skin disorders

**salicylism** /'sælsɪlɪz(ə)m/ *noun* the effects of poisoning due to too much salicylic acid. Symptoms include headache, tinnitus, faintness and vomiting.

**saline** /'seɪlɪn/ *adjective* referring to or containing salt ○ *The patient was given a saline transfusion.* ■ *noun* same as saline solution

**saline drip** /,seɪlɪn 'drɪp/ *noun* a drip containing a saline solution

**saline solution** /'seɪlɪn səl'u:ʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a solution made of distilled water and sodium chloride, which is introduced into the body intravenously through a drip

**saliva** /sə'laɪvə/ *noun* a fluid in the mouth, secreted by the salivary glands, which starts the process of digesting food (NOTE: For terms referring to saliva, see words beginning with **ptyal-**, **ptyalo-** or **sial-**, **sialo-**.)

**salivary** /sə'laɪv(ə)rɪ/ *adjective* referring to saliva

**salivary calculus** /sə,laɪv(ə)rɪ 'kælkjʊləs/ *noun* a stone which forms in a salivary gland

**salivary gland** /sə'laɪv(ə)rɪ glænd/ *noun* a gland which secretes saliva, situated under the tongue (the **sublingual gland**), beneath the lower jaw (the **submandibular gland**) and in the neck at the back of the lower jaw joint (the **parotid gland**)

**salivation** /,sæli'veɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the production of saliva

**Salk vaccine** /'sɔ:k ,væksɪ:n/ *noun* an injected vaccine against poliomyelitis, consisting of inactivated polio virus. Compare **Sabin vaccine**

[Developed 1954. After Jonas Edward Salk (1914–95), virologist in Pittsburgh, USA.]

**salmeterol** /sæl'metərəʊl/ *noun* a drug which relaxes and widens the airways, used to treat severe asthma

**Salmonella** /,sælmə'nələ/ *noun* a genus of pathogenic bacteria which live in the intestines and are usually acquired by eating contaminated food, responsible for many cases of gastroenteritis and for typhoid or paratyphoid fever (NOTE: The plural is **Salmonellae**.)

**Salmonella poisoning** /,sælmə'nələ ,pɔɪz(ə)nɪŋ/ *noun* poisoning caused by *Salmonellae* which develop in the intestines ○ *Five people were taken to hospital with Salmonella poisoning.*

**salmonellosis** /,sælmə'nə'ləʊsɪs/ *noun* food poisoning caused by *Salmonella* in the digestive system

**salping-** /sælpɪndʒ/ *prefix* same as **salpingo-** (used before vowels)

**salpingectomy** /,sælpɪn'dʒektəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to remove or cut a Fallopian tube, used as a method of contraception

**salpingitis** /,sælpɪn'dʒaɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation, usually of a Fallopian tube

**salpingo-** /sælpɪŋɡəʊ/ *prefix* **1.** referring to the Fallopian tubes **2.** referring to the auditory meatus

**salpingography** /,sælpɪŋ'ɡɒɡrəfi/ *noun* an X-ray examination of the Fallopian tubes

**salpingolysis** /,sælpɪŋ'ɡɒlɪsɪs/ *noun* a surgical operation to open up blocked Fallopian tubes by removing any adhesions near the ovaries

**salpingo-oophorectomy** /sæl,pɪŋɡəʊ ,əʊfə'rektəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to remove a Fallopian tube and ovary

**salpingo-oophoritis** /sæl,pɪŋɡəʊ ,əʊfə'reɪtɪs/, **salpingo-oothecitis** /sæl,pɪŋɡəʊ ,əʊθi'saɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of a Fallopian tube and the ovary connected to it

**salpingo-oophorocele** /sæl,pɪŋɡəʊ əʊ'ɒfərəʊsɪ:l/, **salpingo-oothecocele** /sæl,pɪŋɡəʊ ,əʊθi:kəʊsɪ:l/ *noun* a hernia where a Fallopian tube and its ovary pass through a weak point in the surrounding tissue

**salpingostomy** /,sælpɪŋ'ɡɒstəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to open up a blocked Fallopian tube

**salpinx** /'sælpɪŋks/ *noun* same as **Fallopian tube** (NOTE: The plural is **salpinges**.)

**salt** /sɔ:lt/ *noun* **1.** small white crystals mainly of sodium chloride used to flavour and preserve food **2.** a crystalline compound, usually containing a metal, formed when an acid is neutralised by an alkali

**salt-free diet** /,sɔ:lt frɪ: 'daɪət/ *noun* a diet in which no salt is allowed

**salve** /sælv/ *noun* an ointment

**sample** /'sɑ:mpl̩/ *noun* a small quantity of something used for testing ○ *Small samples were taken from all the staff in the hospital.* ○ *The doctor asked her to provide a urine sample.*

**sanatorium** /,sænə'tɔ:riəm/ *noun* an institution, similar to a hospital, which treats particular types of disorder such as tuberculosis, or offers special treatment such as hot baths or massage (NOTE: The plural is **sanatoria** or **sanatoriums**.)

**sandfly fever** /'sændflaɪ, 'fi:vəl/ *noun* a virus infection like influenza, which is transmitted by the bite of the sandfly *Phlebotomus papatasi* and is common in the Middle East

**sandwich therapy** /'sænwi:dʒ, θerəpi/ *noun* a system in which one type of treatment is used between exposures to a different treatment, e.g., chemotherapy given before and after radiation, or radiation given before and after surgery

**sangui-** /sæŋgwɪ/ *prefix* relating to blood

**sanguineous** /sæŋ'gwɪniəs/ *adjective* referring to blood, containing blood

**sanies** /'seɪni:z/ *noun* a discharge from a sore or wound which has an unpleasant smell

**sanitary towel** /'sænɪt(ə)rɪ, 'taʊəl/ *noun* a disposable pad of absorbent material worn by women to absorb the blood flow during menstruation

**SA node** /,es 'eɪ, 'nəʊd/, **S-A node** /,es 'eɪ, 'nəʊd/ *noun* same as **sinoatrial node**

**saphena** /sə'fi:nə/ *noun* same as **saphenous vein** (NOTE: The plural is **saphenae**.)

**saphenous** /sə'fi:nəs/ *adjective* relating to the saphenous veins

**saphenous nerve** /sə'fi:nəs nɜ:v/ *noun* a branch of the femoral nerve which connects with the sensory nerves in the skin of the lower leg

**saphenous vein** /sə'fi:nəs veɪn/ *noun* one of two veins which take blood from the foot up the leg. Also called **saphena**

COMMENT: The long (internal) saphenous vein, the longest vein in the body, runs from the foot up the inside of the leg and joins the femoral vein. The short (posterior) saphenous vein runs up the back of the lower leg and joins the popliteal vein.

**sapphism** /'sæfɪz(ə)m/ *noun* same as **lesbianism**

**sarc-** /sɑ:k/, **sarco-** /sɑ:kəʊ/ *prefix* 1. referring to flesh 2. referring to muscle

**sarcoid** /'sɑ:kɔɪd/ *noun* a tumour which is like a sarcoma ■ *adjective* like a sarcoma

**sarcoidosis** /,sɑ:kɔɪ'dəʊsɪs/ *noun* a disease causing enlargement of the lymph nodes, where small nodules or granulomas form in certain tissues, especially in the lungs or liver and other parts of the body. Also called **Boeck's disease**, **Boeck's sarcoid** (NOTE: The Kveim test confirms the presence of sarcoidosis.)

**sarcolemma** /sɑ:kəʊ'lemə/ *noun* a membrane surrounding a muscle fibre

**sarcoma** /sɑ:'kəʊmə/ *noun* a cancer of connective tissue such as bone, muscle or cartilage

**sarcomatosis** /sɑ:,kəʊmə'təʊsɪs/ *noun* a condition in which a sarcoma has spread through the bloodstream to many parts of the body

**sarcoptes** /sɑ:'kɔpti:z/ *noun* a type of mite which causes scabies

**SARS** /sɑ:z/ *noun* a serious, sometimes fatal, infection affecting the respiratory system, first seen in China. Suspected cases of SARS must be isolated with full barrier nursing precautions. Full form **severe acute respiratory syndrome**

**sartorius** /sɑ:'tɔ:riəs/ *noun* a very long muscle, the longest muscle in the body, which runs from the anterior iliac spine, across the thigh down to the tibia

**saturated fat** /,sætʃəreɪtɪd 'fæt/ *noun* a fat which has the largest amount of hydrogen possible

**satyriasis** /,sætə'raɪəsɪs/ *noun* an obsessive sexual urge in a man (NOTE: A similar condition in a woman is called **nymphomania**.)

**saucerisation** /,sɔ:səraɪ'zeɪʃ(ə)n/, **saucerization** *noun* 1. a surgical operation in which tissue is cut out in the form of a saucer-like depression, usually in order to help material drain away from infected areas of bone 2. the shallow saucer-like appearance of the upper surface of a vertebra after a compression fracture

**s.c.** *abbreviation* subcutaneous

**scab** /skæb/ *noun* a crust of dry blood which forms over a wound and protects it

**scabicide** /'skeɪbəsaɪd/ *noun* a solution which kills mites ■ *adjective* killing mites

**scabies** /'skeɪbi:z/ *noun* a very irritating infection of the skin caused by a mite which lives under the skin

**scala** /'skɑ:lə/ *noun* a spiral canal in the cochlea  
**scald** /skɔ:ld/ *noun* an injury to the skin caused by touching a very hot liquid or steam. Also called **wet burn** ■ *verb* to injure the skin with a very hot liquid or steam

**scale** /skeɪl/ *noun* 1. a thin flat piece of something such as dead skin 2. same as **tartar** 3. a system of measurement or valuation based on a series of marks or levels with regular intervals between them ○ *a pay scale* 4. same as **scales** ■ *verb* to remove the calcium deposits from teeth

**scalenus** /skeɪ'li:nəs/, **scalene** /'skelɪ:n/ *noun* one of a group of muscles in the neck which bend the neck forwards and sideways, and also help expand the lungs in deep breathing

**scalenus syndrome** /skeɪ'li:nəs, 'sɪndrəʊm/ *noun* a pain in an arm, caused by the scalenus anterior muscle pressing the subclavian artery and the brachial plexus against the vertebrae. Also called **thoracic outlet syndrome**

**scaler** /ˈskeɪlə/ *noun* a surgical instrument for scaling teeth

**scales** /skeɪlz/ *noun* a machine for weighing ○ *The nurses weighed the baby on the scales.*

**scalp** /skælp/ *noun* the thick skin and muscle, with the hair, which covers the skull

**scalpel** /ˈskælpəl/ *noun* a small sharp-pointed knife used in surgery

**scan** /skæn/ *noun* an examination of part of the body using computer-interpreted X-rays to create a picture of the part on a screen ■ *verb* to examine part of the body using computer-interpreted X-rays to create a picture of the part on a screen

**scanning** /ˈskænrɪŋ/ *noun* **1.** the act of examining an area with the eyes **2.** the act of examining internal organs of the body with a piece of electronic equipment

**scaphocephalic** /ˌskæfəʊsəˈfæɪlɪk/ *adjective* having a long narrow skull

**scaphocephaly** /ˌskæfəʊˈkefəli, ˌskæfəʊˈsefəli/ *noun* a condition in which the skull is unusually long and narrow

**scaphoid** /ˈskæfɔɪd/, **scaphoid bone** /ˈskæfɔɪd bəʊn/ *noun* one of the carpal bones in the wrist. See illustration at **HAND** in Supplement

**scapula** /ˈskæpjʊlə/ *noun* one of two large flat bones covering the top part of the back. Also called **shoulder blade** (NOTE: The plural is **scapulae**.)

**scapular** /ˈskæpjʊlə/ *adjective* referring to the shoulder blade

**scapulo-** /skæpjʊləʊ/ *prefix* relating to the scapula

**scapulohumeral** /ˌskæpjʊləʊˈhju:mərəl/ *adjective* referring to the scapula and humerus

**scar** /skɑ:/ *noun* the mark left on the skin after a wound or surgical incision has healed ○ *He still has the scar of his appendectomy.* Also called **ciatrix** ■ *verb* to leave a scar on the skin ○ *The burns have scarred him for life.* ○ *Plastic surgeons have tried to repair the scarred arm.* ○ *Patients were given special clothes to reduce hypertrophic scarring.*

**scarlatina** /ˌskɑ:ləˈti:nə/, **scarlet fever** /ˌskɑ:lət ˈfi:vəl/ *noun* an infectious disease with a fever, sore throat and a red rash. It is caused by a haemolytic streptococcus and can sometimes have serious complications if the kidneys are infected.

**scar tissue** /ˈskɑ:ˌtɪʃu:/ *noun* fibrous tissue which forms a scar

**scat-** /skæt/, **scato-** /skætəʊ/ *prefix* referring to the faeces

**scatole** /ˈskætəʊl/ *noun* a substance in faeces, formed in the intestine, which causes a strong smell (NOTE: Also spelled **skatole**.)

**SCC** *abbreviation* squamous cell carcinoma

**Scheuermann's disease** /ˈʃɔ:əmənz dɪˌzi:z/ *noun* inflammation of the bones and cartilage in the spine, usually affecting adolescents [Described 1920. After Holger Werfel Scheuermann (1877–1960), Danish orthopaedic surgeon and radiologist.]

**Schick test** /ˈʃɪk test/ *noun* a test to see if a person is immune to diphtheria [Described 1908. After Bela Schick (1877–1967), paediatrician in Vienna, Austria, and New York, USA.]

**Schilling test** /ˈʃɪlɪŋ test/ *noun* a test to see if someone can absorb Vitamin B<sub>12</sub> through the intestines, to determine cases of pernicious anaemia [After Robert Frederick Schilling (b. 1919), US physician.]

**-schisis** /skɑɪsɪs/ *suffix* referring to a fissure or split

**schisto-** /ʃɪstəʊ/ *prefix* referring to something which is split

**Schistosoma** /ˌʃɪstəˈsəʊmə/, **schistosome** /ˌʃɪstəsəʊm/ same as **bilharzia**

**schistosomiasis** /ˌʃɪstəsəʊˈmaɪəsɪs/ *noun* same as **bilharziasis**

**schiz-** /skɪts/, **schizo-** /skɪtsəʊ/ *prefix* referring to something which is split

**schizoid** /ˈskɪtsɔɪd/ *adjective* referring to schizophrenia ■ *noun* a person who has a less severe form of schizophrenia

**schizoid personality** /ˌskɪtsɔɪd ˌpɜ:səˈnælti/ *noun* a disorder in which someone is cold towards other people, thinks mainly about himself or herself and behaves in an odd way. Also called **split personality**

**schizophrenia** /ˌskɪtsəʊˈfri:nɪə/ *noun* a mental disorder in which someone withdraws from contact with other people, has delusions and seems to lose contact with the real world

**schizophrenic** /ˌskɪtsəʊˈfrenɪk/ *noun* someone who has schizophrenia ■ *adjective* having schizophrenia

**Schlemm's canal** /ˈʃlemz kəˌnæl/ *noun* a circular canal in the sclera of the eye, which drains the aqueous humour [Described 1830. After Friedrich Schlemm (1795–1858), Professor of Anatomy in Berlin, Germany.]

**Schönlein-Henoch purpura** /ˌʃɜ:nlaɪn ˈhɛnək ˌpɜ:pjʊərə/, **Schönlein's purpura** /ˌʃɜ:nlaɪnz ˌpɜ:pjʊərə/ *noun* a blood disorder of children, in which the skin becomes purple on the buttocks and lower legs, the joints are swollen and painful and there are gastrointestinal problems

**school health service** /sku:l ˈhelθ ˌsɜ:vɪs/ *noun* a special service, part of the local health authority, which looks after the health of children in school

**school nurse** /ˈsku:l nɜ:s/ *noun* a nurse who works in a school, treating health problems and promoting health and safety

**Schwann cells** /'ʃvɒn selz/ *plural noun* the cells which form the myelin sheath around a nerve fibre. See illustration at **NEURONE** in Supplement [Described 1839. After Friedrich Theodor Schwann (1810–82), German anatomist.]

**sciatic** /saɪ'ætɪk/ *adjective* **1.** referring to the hip **2.** referring to the sciatic nerve

**sciatica** /saɪ'ætɪkə/ *noun* pain along the sciatic nerve, usually at the back of the thighs and legs

**sciatic nerve** /saɪ'ætɪk nɜːv/ *noun* one of two main nerves which run from the sacral plexus into each of the thighs, dividing into a series of nerves in the lower legs and feet. They are the largest nerves in the body.

**scintigram** /'sɪntɪgræm/ *noun* an image recording radiation from radioactive isotopes injected into the body

**scirrhous** /'sɪrəs/ *adjective* hard ○ *a scirrhous tumour*

**scirrhus** /'sɪrəs/ *noun* a hard malignant tumour, especially in the breast

**scissor leg** /'sɪzə leg/ *noun* a condition in which someone walks with one leg crossing over the other, usually as a result of spasticity of the leg's adductor muscles

**scissor legs** /'sɪzə legz/ *plural noun* malformed legs, where one leg is permanently crossed over in front of the other

**scissura** /'sɪʃjərə/ *noun* an opening in something or a splitting of something

**scler-** /sklɪə/ *prefix* same as **sclero-** (used before vowels)

**sclera** /'sklɪərə/ *noun* the hard white outer covering of the eyeball. See illustration at **EYE** in Supplement. Also called **sclerotic**, **sclerotic coat**, **albuginea oculi**

**scleral** /'sklɪərəl/ *adjective* referring to the sclera

**scleritis** /sklɪ'ræɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the sclera

**sclero-** /sklɪərəʊ/ *prefix* **1.** hard, thick **2.** referring to the sclera

**scleroderma** /,sklɪərə'dɜːmə/ *noun* a collagen disease which thickens connective tissue and produces a hard thick skin

**scleromalacia** /,sklɪərəʊmə'leɪʃiə pə'fɔːræns/, **scleromalacia perforans** /,sklɪərəʊmə'leɪʃiə/ *noun* a condition of the sclera in which holes appear in it

**sclerosant agent** /sklɪ'rəʊs(ə)nt ,eɪdʒənt/ *noun* an irritating liquid injected into tissue to harden it

**sclerosing** /sklɪ'rəʊsɪŋ/ *adjective* becoming hard, or making tissue hard

**sclerosing agent** /sklɪ'rəʊsɪŋ ,eɪdʒ(ə)nt/,

**sclerosing solution** /sklɪ'rəʊsɪŋ sə,ljuːʃ(ə)n/ *noun* same as **sclerosant agent**

**sclerosis** /sklɪ'rəʊsɪs/ *noun* a condition in which tissue becomes hard

**sclerotherapy** /,sklɪərəʊ'therəpi/ *noun* the treatment of a varicose vein by injecting a sclerosant agent into the vein, and so encouraging the blood in the vein to clot

**sclerotic** /sklɪ'rɒtɪk/ *adjective* referring to sclerosis, or having sclerosis ■ *noun* same as **sclera**

**sclerotic coat** /sklɪ'rɒtɪk 'kəʊt/ *noun* same as **sclera**

**sclerotome** /'sklɪrətəʊm/ *noun* a sharp knife used in sclerotomy

**sclerotomy** /sklɪ'rɒtəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to cut into the sclera

**scotex** /'skəʊleks/ *noun* the head of a tapeworm, with hooks which attach it to the wall of the intestine (NOTE: The plural is **scolices** or **scotexes**.)

**scoliosis** /,skəʊli'əʊsɪs/ *noun* a condition in which the spine curves sideways

**scoliotic** /,skəʊli'ɒtɪk/ *adjective* referring to a spine which curves sideways

**SCOPE** /skəʊp/ *noun* a UK organisation that offers support and services to people with cerebral palsy

**-scope** /skəʊp/ *suffix* referring to an instrument for examining by sight

**scopolamine** /skə'pɒləmiːn/ *noun* a colourless thick liquid poisonous alkaloid found in some plants of the nightshade family. It is used especially to prevent motion sickness and as a sedative.

**scorbutic** /skɔː'bjuːtɪk/ *adjective* referring to scurvy

**scorbutus** /skɔː'bjuːtəs/ *noun* same as **scurvy**

**scoto-** /skəʊtə/ *prefix* dark

**scotoma** /skɔ'təʊmə/ *noun* a small area in the field of vision where someone cannot see

**scotometer** /skəʊ'tɒmɪtə/ *noun* an instrument used to measure areas of impaired vision

**scotopia** /skəʊ'təʊpiə/ *noun* the power of the eye to adapt to poor lighting conditions and darkness

**scotopic** /skəʊ'tɒpɪk/ *adjective* referring to scotopia

**scotopic vision** /skəʊ'tɒpɪk 'vɪʒ(ə)n/ *noun* vision in the dark and in dim light, where the rods of the retina are used instead of the cones, which are used for photopic vision. ◊ **dark adaptation**

**screen** /skriːn/ *noun* **1.** a light wall, sometimes with a curtain, which can be moved about and put round a bed to shield a person **2.** same as **screening** ■ *verb* to examine large numbers of people to test them for a disease ○ *The population of the village was screened for meningitis.*

**screening** /'skri:nɪŋ/ *noun* the process of testing large numbers of people to see if any of them have a particular type of disease.  $\diamond$  **genetic screening**

**screening test** /'skri:nɪŋ test/ *noun* a test for a particular disease which is given to people who have no symptoms in order to identify how many of them have that disease or are showing early signs of it

**scrotal** /'skrɔ:t(ə)/ *adjective* referring to the scrotum

**scrototomy** /skrɔ:t'ɒtəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to open up and examine the scrotum (NOTE: The plural is **scrototomies**.)

**scrotum** /'skrɔ:təm/ *noun* a bag of skin hanging from behind the penis, containing the testes, epididymides and part of the spermatic cord. See illustration at **UROGENITAL SYSTEM (MALE)** in Supplement (NOTE: The plural is **scrotums** or **scrota**.)

**scrub up** /,skrʌb 'ʌp/ *verb* (of a surgeon or theatre nurse) to clean the hands and arms thoroughly before performing surgery (NOTE: **scrubbing up** – **scrubbed up**)

**scrumpox** /'skrʌmpɒks/ *noun* a form of herpes simplex found especially in male sports players, passed on easily due to the presence of small cuts in the skin combined with the abrasive effects of facial stubble

**scurf** /skɜ:f/ *noun* same as **dandruff**

**scurvy** /'skɜ:vi/ *noun* a disease caused by lack of vitamin C or ascorbic acid which is found in fruit and vegetables. Also called **scorbutus**

**scybalum** /'sɪbələm/ *noun* very hard faeces

**seasickness** /'si:sɪknəs/ *noun* illness, with nausea, vomiting and sometimes headache, caused by the movement of a ship  $\circ$  *Take some seasickness tablets if you are going on a long journey.*

**seasonal affective disorder** /,si:z(ə)n(ə)l ə 'fektɪv dɪs,ɔ:də/, **seasonal affective disorder syndrome** /,si:z(ə)n(ə)l ə'fektɪv dɪs,ɔ:də ,sɪndrəʊm/ *noun* a condition in which a person becomes depressed and anxious during the winter when there are fewer hours of daylight. Its precise cause is not known, but it is thought that the shortage of daylight may provoke a reaction between various hormones and neurotransmitters in the brain. Abbreviation **SAD**, **SADS**

**seat** /si:t/ *noun* same as **buttock** (*informal*)

**seat-belt syndrome** /'si:t belt ,sɪndrəʊm/ *noun* a group of injuries between the neck and the abdomen which occur in a car accident when a person is using either a lap belt or a shoulder belt incorrectly, not over the strongest part of the chest

**sebaceous** /sə'beɪʃəs/ *adjective* referring to sebum

**sebaceous cyst** /sə'beɪʃəs 'sɪst/ *noun* a cyst which forms when a sebaceous gland is blocked.  $\diamond$  **steatoma**

**sebaceous gland** /sə'beɪʃəs 'glænd/ *noun* a gland in the skin which secretes sebum at the base of each hair follicle

**seborrhoea** /,sebə'ri:ə/ *noun* an excessive secretion of sebum by the sebaceous glands, common in young people at puberty, and sometimes linked to seborrhoeic dermatitis (NOTE: The US spelling is **seborrhea**.)

**seborrhoeic** /,sebə'ri:ɪk/ *adjective* caused by seborrhoea (NOTE: The US spelling is **seborrheic**.)

**seborrhoeic dermatitis** /,sebə'ri:ɪk ,dɜ:mə 'taɪtɪs/, **seborrhoeic eczema** /,sebə'ri:ɪk 'eksɪmə/ *noun* a type of eczema where scales form on the skin

**sebum** /'si:bəm/ *noun* an oily substance secreted by a sebaceous gland, which makes the skin smooth. It also protects the skin against bacteria and the body against rapid evaporation of water.

**secondary** /'sekənd(ə)ri/ *adjective* **1.** occurring after the first stage **2.** less important than something else  $\blacksquare$  *noun* a malignant tumour which has developed and spread from another malignant tumour.  $\diamond$  **primary** (NOTE: The plural is **secondaries**.)

**secondary amenorrhoea** /,sekənd(ə)ri ɛɪ ,menə'ri:ə/ *noun* a situation in which a premenopausal woman's menstrual periods have stopped

**secondary biliary cirrhosis** /,sekənd(ə)ri ,bɪliəri sə'rʊsɪs/ *noun* cirrhosis of the liver caused by an obstruction of the bile ducts

**secondary care** /,sekənd(ə)ri 'keə/ *noun* treatment provided by the professional team in a hospital, rather than by a GP or other primary care provider and the primary health care team. Compare **primary care**, **tertiary care**. Also called **secondary health care**

**secondary growth** /,sekənd(ə)ri 'grəʊθ/ *noun* same as **metastasis**

**secondary haemorrhage** /,sekənd(ə)ri 'hem(ə)rɪdʒ/ *noun* a haemorrhage which occurs some time after an injury, usually due to infection of the wound

**secondary health care** /,sekənd(ə)ri 'helθ ,keə/ *noun* same as **secondary care**

**secondary infection** /,sekənd(ə)ri ɪn 'fekʃən/ *noun* an infection which affects a person while he or she is weakened through having another infection

**secondary medical care** /,sekənd(ə)ri 'medɪk(ə)l ,keə/ *noun* specialised treatment provided by a hospital

**secondary peritonitis** /,sekənd(ə)ri ,perɪtə 'naɪtɪs/ *noun* peritonitis caused by infection from

an adjoining tissue, e.g. from the rupturing of the appendix

**secondary prevention** /,sɛkənd(ə)rɪ prɪ 'venʃən/ *noun* the use of methods such as screening tests which avoid a serious disease by detecting it early

**secondary sexual characteristic** /,sɛkənd(ə)rɪ ,sɛkʃuəl ,kærɪktə'rɪstɪk/ *noun* a sexual characteristic which develops after puberty, e.g. pubic hair or breasts

**second-degree burn** /,sɛkənd dɪˌɡriː 'bɜːn/ *noun* a burn where the skin becomes very red and blisters

**second-level nurse** /,sɛkənd ,lev(ə)l 'nɜːs/,  
**second-level registered nurse** /,sɛkənd ,lev(ə)l ,redʒɪstəd 'nɜːs/ *noun* a trained person who delivers nursing care under the direction and supervision of a first-level nurse. Compare **first-level nurse**

**secretin** /sɪ'kriːtɪn/ *noun* a hormone secreted by the duodenum which encourages the production of pancreatic juice

**secretion** /sɪ'kriːʃ(ə)n/ *noun* **1.** the process by which a substance is produced by a gland ○ *The pituitary gland stimulates the secretion of hormones by the adrenal gland.* **2.** a substance produced by a gland ○ *Sex hormones are bodily secretions.*

**secretor** /sɪ'kriːtə/ *noun* a person who secretes substances indicating ABO blood group into mucous fluids such as semen or saliva

**secretory otitis media** /sɪ,kriːtəri əʊ,tatɪs 'miːdiə/ *noun* same as **glue ear**

**section** /'sɛkʃən/ *noun* **1.** a part of something ○ *the middle section of the aorta* **2.** the action of cutting tissue **3.** a slice of tissue cut for examination under a microscope **4.** a part of a document such as an Act of Parliament ○ *She was admitted under section 5 of the Mental Health Act.*

**Section 47** /,sɛkʃən ,fɔːtɪ 'sev(ə)n/ *noun* a UK law under which a local authority has the power to seek an order from a magistrate's court authorising the removal of a person at severe risk from their home. The authority must have a doctor's certificate that the person is either suffering from a grave and chronic disease or is unable to look after himself or herself and is not receiving proper care and attention from other people.

**security blanket** /sɪ'kjʊərɪtɪ ,blæŋkɪt/ *noun* a familiar blanket, toy or other object which a child carries around because it makes him or her feel safe

**sedation** /sɪ'deɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the act of calming someone using a sedative

**sedative** /'sedətɪv/ *noun* an anxiolytic or hypnotic drug such as benzodiazepine, which acts on the nervous system to help a person sleep or to relieve stress (*dated*) ○ *She was prescribed seda-*

*tives by the doctor.* ■ *adjective* acting to help a person sleep or to relieve stress

**sedentary** /'sed(ə)nt(ə)rɪ/ *adjective* involving a lot of sitting and little exercise

**sedentary occupation** /,sɛd(ə)nt(ə)rɪ ,ɒkjʊ 'peɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a job where the workers sit down for most of the time

**sedimentation** /,sɛdɪmən'teɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the action of solid particles falling to the bottom of a liquid

**sedimentation rate** /,sɛdɪmən'teɪʃ(ə)n ,reɪt/ *noun* the rate at which solid particles are deposited from a solution, measured especially in a centrifuge

**segment** /'segmənt/ *noun* a part of an organ or piece of tissue which is clearly separate from other parts

**segmental** /seg'ment(ə)l/ *adjective* formed of segments

**segmental ablation** /seg,ment(ə)l æ 'bleɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a surgical operation to remove part of a nail, e.g. treatment for an ingrowing toenail

**segregation** /,segrɪ'geɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* **1.** the act of separating one person, group or thing from others, or of dividing people or things into separate groups which are kept apart from each other **2.** the separation of the alleles of each gene and their distribution to separate sex cells during the formation of these cells in organisms with paired chromosomes

**seizure** /'siːʒə/ *noun* a fit, convulsion or sudden contraction of the muscles, especially in a heart attack, stroke or epileptic fit

**selective** /sɪ'lektɪv/ *adjective* choosing only one person, thing or group, and not others

**selective serotonin re-uptake inhibitor** /sɪ,lektɪv sɛrə'təʊnɪn rɪ:'ʌpteɪk ɪn,hɪbət/ *noun* a drug which causes a selective accumulation of serotonin in the central nervous system, and is used in the treatment of depression, e.g. fluoxetine. Abbreviation **SSRI**

COMMENT: The drug should not be started immediately after stopping an MAOI and should be withdrawn slowly.

**selenium** /sə'liːniəm/ *noun* a non-metallic trace element (NOTE: The chemical symbol is **Se.**)

**self-** /self/ *prefix* yourself

**self-abuse** /,self ə'bjuːs/ *noun* same as **self-harm**

**self-actualisation** /self ,æktʃuələɪ'zeɪʃ(ə)n/,  
**self-actualization** *noun* the successful development and use of personal talents and abilities

**self-care** /,self 'keə/ *noun* the act of looking after yourself properly, so that you remain healthy

**self-catheterisation** /,self ,kæθɪtərəɪ 'zeɪʃ(ə)n/,  
**self-catheterization** *noun* a procedure in which a person puts a catheter through the

urethra into his or her own bladder to empty out the urine

**self-governing hospital** /,self ˌgʌvənɪŋ 'hɒspɪt(ə)l/ *noun* in the UK, a hospital which earns its revenue from services provided to the District Health Authorities and family doctors. Also called **hospital trust**

**self-harm** /,self 'hɑ:m/ *noun* a deliberate act by which someone injures part of their body as the result of a personal trauma. Cutting and burning are two of the most common forms of self-harm. Also called **self-abuse**, **self-injury**, **self-mutilation**, **self-wounding**

**self-image** /,self 'ɪmɪdʒ/ *noun* the opinion which a person has about how worthwhile, attractive, or intelligent he or she is

**self-injury** /,self 'ɪndʒəri/, **self-mutilation** /,self ˌmju:tɪ'leɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* same as **self-harm**

**self-retaining catheter** /,self rɪ'teɪnɪŋ 'kæθɪtə/ *noun* a catheter which remains in place until it is deliberately removed

**self-wounding** /,self 'wu:ndɪŋ/ *noun* same as **self-harm**

**sella turcica** /,selə 'tɜ:sɪkə/ *noun* a hollow in the upper surface of the sphenoid bone in which the pituitary gland sits. Also called **pituitary fossa**

**semeiology** /,si:maɪ'blɒdʒi/ *noun* same as **symptomatology**

**semen** /'si:mən/ *noun* a thick pale fluid containing spermatozoa, produced by the testes and seminal vesicles and ejaculated from the penis

**semi-** /semi/ *prefix* half

**semicircular** /,semi'sɜ:kjʊlə/ *adjective* shaped like half a circle

**semicircular canal** /,semisɜ:kjʊlə kə'næl/ *noun* any one of three tubes in the inner ear which are partly filled with fluid and help to maintain balance. See illustration at **EAR** in Supplement

COMMENT: The three semicircular canals are on different planes. When a person's head moves, as when he or she bends down, the fluid in the canals moves and this movement is communicated to the brain through the vestibular section of the auditory nerve.

**semicomatose** /,semi'kəʊmətəʊs/ *adjective* almost unconscious or half asleep, but capable of being woken up

**semilunar** /,semi'lʊ:nə/ *adjective* shaped like half a moon

**semilunar cartilage** /,semilʊ:nə 'kɑ:təɪlɪdʒ/ *noun* same as **meniscus**

**semilunar valve** /,semilʊ:nə 'vælv/ *noun* either of two valves in the heart, the pulmonary valve and the aortic valve, through which blood flows out of the ventricles

**seminal** /'semɪn(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to semen

**seminal fluid** /'semɪn(ə)l ˌflu:ɪd/ *noun* the fluid part of semen, formed in the epididymis and seminal vesicles

**seminal vesicle** /,semɪn(ə)l 'vesɪk(ə)l/ *noun* one of two glands at the end of the vas deferens which secrete the fluid part of semen. See illustration at **urogenital system (male)** in Supplement

**semiferrous tubule** /semi,nɪfərəs 'tju:bju:l/ *noun* a tubule in the testis which carries semen

**seminoma** /,semi'nəʊmə/ *noun* a malignant tumour in the testis (NOTE: The plural is **seminomas** or **seminomata**.)

**semipermeable** /,semi'pɜ:miəb(ə)l/ *adjective* allowing some types of particle to pass through but not others

**semipermeable membrane** /,semi'pɜ:miəb(ə)l 'membreɪn/ *noun* a membrane which allows some substances in liquid solution to pass through but not others

**semiprone** /,semi'prəʊn/ *adjective* referring to a position in which someone lies face downwards, with one knee and one arm bent forwards and the face turned to one side

**SEN** *abbreviation* State Enrolled Nurse

**senescence** /sɪ'nesəns/ *noun* the ageing process

**senescent** /sɪ'nesənt/ *adjective* approaching the last stages of the natural life span

**Sengstaken tube** /'seŋztekən tju:b/ *noun* a tube with a balloon, which is passed through the mouth into the oesophagus to stop oesophageal bleeding [After Robert William Sengstaken (b. 1923), US surgeon.]

**senile** /'si:nəl/ *adjective* referring to the last stages of the natural life span or to the medical conditions associated with it

**senile dementia** /,si:nəl dɪ'menʃə/ *noun* mental degeneration affecting elderly people (*dated*)

**senilis** /sə'nɪlɪs/ ♦ **arcus senilis**

**senility** /sə'nɪlɪti/ *noun* the deterioration of mental activity associated with the last stages of the natural life span

**senna** /'senə/ *noun* a laxative made from the dried fruit and leaves of a tropical tree

**sensation** /sen'seɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a feeling or information about something which has been sensed by a sensory nerve and is passed to the brain

**sense** /sens/ *noun* 1. one of the five faculties by which a person notices things in the outside world: sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch ○ *When she had a cold, she lost her sense of smell.* 2. the ability to discern or judge something ■ *verb* to notice something by means other than sight ○ *Teeth can sense changes in temperature.*

**sense organ** /'sens ˌɔːɡən/ *noun* an organ in which there are various sensory nerves which can detect environmental stimuli such as scent, heat or pain, and transmit information about them to the central nervous system, e.g. the nose or the skin

**sensibility** /,sensɪ'bɪlɪti/ *noun* the ability to detect and interpret sensations

**sensible** /'sensɪb(ə)l/ *adjective* **1.** showing common sense or good judgment **2.** able to be detected by the senses

**sensible perspiration** /,sensəb(ə)l ˌpɜːspə'reɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* drops of sweat which can be seen on the skin, secreted by the sweat glands

**sensitisation** /,sensɪtaɪ'zeɪʃ(ə)n/, **sensitization** *noun* **1.** the process of making a person sensitive to something **2.** an unexpected reaction to an allergen or to a drug, caused by the presence of antibodies which were created when the person was exposed to the drug or allergen in the past

**sensitive** /'sensɪtɪv/ *adjective* **1.** able to detect and respond to an outside stimulus **2.** having an unexpected reaction to an allergen or to a drug, caused by the presence of antibodies which were created when the person was exposed to the drug or allergen in the past

**sensitivity** /,sensɪ'tɪvɪti/ *noun* **1.** the fact of being able to detect and respond to an outside stimulus **2.** the rate of positive responses in a test from persons with a specific disease. A high rate of sensitivity means a low rate of people being incorrectly classified as negative. Compare **specificity**

**sensorineural deafness** /,sensəri,njʊərəl'defnəs/, **sensorineural hearing loss** /,sensəri,njʊərəl'hɪərɪŋ ˌlɒs/ *noun* deafness caused by a disorder in the auditory nerves or the brain centres which receive impulses from the nerves. Also called **perceptive deafness**

**sensory** /'sensəri/ *adjective* referring to the detection of sensations by nerve cells

**sensory cortex** /,sensəri'kɔːteks/ *noun* the area of the cerebral cortex which receives information from nerves in all parts of the body (*dated*)

**sensory deprivation** /'sensəri ˌdeprɪveɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a condition in which a person becomes confused because they lack sensations

**sensory nerve** /'sensəri nɜːv/ *noun* a nerve which registers a sensation such as heat, taste or smell and carries impulses to the brain and spinal cord. Also called **afferent nerve**

**sensory neurone** /'sensəri,njʊərəʊn/ *noun* a nerve cell which transmits impulses relating to sensations from the receptor to the central nervous system

**sensory receptor** /'sensəri rɪ,septə/ *noun* a cell which senses a change in the surrounding

environment, e.g. cold or pressure, and reacts to it by sending out an impulse through the nervous system. Also called **nerve ending**

**sepsis** /'sepsɪs/ *noun* the presence of bacteria and their toxins in the body, which kill tissue and produce pus, usually following the infection of a wound

**sept-** /sept/ *prefix* same as **septi-** (*used before vowels*)

**septa** /'septə/ plural of **septum**

**septal** /'sept(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to a septum

**septal defect** /,sept(ə)l'diːfekt/ *noun* a congenital condition in which a hole exists in the wall between the left and right sides of the heart allowing an excessive amount of blood to flow through the lungs, leading in severe cases to pulmonary hypertension and sometimes heart failure

**septate** /'septet/ *adjective* divided by a septum

**septi-** /septɪ/ *prefix* referring to sepsis

**septic** /'septɪk/ *adjective* referring to or produced by sepsis

**septicaemia** /,septɪ'sɪmiə/ *noun* a condition in which bacteria or their toxins are present in the blood, multiply rapidly and destroy tissue (NOTE: The US spelling is **septicemia**.)

**septic shock** /,septɪk'ʃɒk/ *noun* shock caused by bacterial toxins in the blood as a result of infection. There is a dramatic drop in blood pressure, preventing the delivery of blood to the organs. Toxic shock syndrome is one type of septic shock.

**septo-** /septəʊ/ *prefix* referring to a septum

**septoplasty** /'septəʊplæsti/ *noun* a surgical operation to straighten the cartilage in the septum (NOTE: The plural is **septoplasties**.)

**Septrin** /'septrɪn/ a trade name for co-trimoxazole

**septum** /'septəm/ *noun* a wall between two parts of an organ, e.g. between two parts of the heart or between the two nostrils in the nose. See illustration at **HEART** in Supplement (NOTE: The plural is **septa**.)

**sequela** /sɪ'kwɪ:lə/ *noun* a disease or disorder that is caused by a disease or injury which the person had previously ○ a case of osteomyelitis as a sequela of multiple fractures of the mandible ○ biochemical and hormonal sequelae of the eating disorders ○ Kaposi's sarcoma can be a sequela of Aids. (NOTE: The plural is **sequelae**.)

**sequestra** /sɪ'kwestrə/ plural *noun* plural of **sequestrum**

**sequestration** /,sɪ:kwe'streɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* **1.** the act of putting someone in an isolated place **2.** the loss of blood into spaces in the body, reducing the circulating volume. It can occur naturally or can be produced artificially by applying tourniquets. ○ pulmonary sequestration ○ A dry hacking cough can cause sequestration of the perito-



*neum in the upper abdomen.* **3.** the formation of a sequestrum

**sequestrectomy** /,si:kwɪ'strektəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to remove a sequestrum (NOTE: The plural is **sequestrectomies**.)

**sequestrum** /sɪ'kwɛstrəm/ *noun* a piece of dead bone which is separated from whole bone (NOTE: The plural is **sequestra**.)

**ser-** /sɪər/ *prefix* same as **sero-** (used before vowels)

**sera** /'sɪərə/ *plural noun* plural of **serum**

**SERM** *abbreviation* selective (o)estrogen receptor modulator

**sero-** /sɪərəʊ/ *prefix* **1.** referring to blood serum **2.** referring to the serous membrane

**seroconvert** /,sɪərəʊkən'vɜ:t/ *verb* to produce specific antibodies in response to the presence of an antigen such as a bacterium or virus

**serological** /,sɪərə'lədʒɪk(ə)/ *adjective* referring to serology

**serological type** /,sɪərə'lədʒɪk(ə)l'taɪp/ *noun* same as **serotype**

**serology** /sɪə'rɒlədʒi/ *noun* the scientific study of serum and the antibodies contained in it

**seropus** /'sɪərəʊ,pʌs/ *noun* a mixture of serum and pus

**serosa** /sɪ'rəʊsə/ *noun* same as **serous membrane** (NOTE: The plural is **serosas** or **serosae**.)

**serositis** /,sɪərəʊ'saɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of a serous membrane

**serotherapy** /,sɪərəʊ'therəpi/ *noun* treatment of a disease using serum from immune people or immunised animals

**serotonin** /,sɪərə'təʊnɪn/ *noun* a compound which is a neurotransmitter and exists mainly in blood platelets. It is released after tissue is injured and is important in sleep, mood and vasoconstriction.

**serotype** /'sɪərəʊtaɪp/ *noun* a group of closely related microorganisms which all have the same type of antigens

**serous** /'sɪərəs/ *adjective* referring to, producing, or like serum

**serous membrane** /,sɪərəs'membreɪn/ *noun* a membrane which both lines an internal cavity and covers the organs in the cavity, e.g. the peritoneum lining the abdominal cavity or pleura lining the chest cavity. Also called **serosa**

**serpiginous** /sə'pɪdʒɪnəs/ *adjective* referring to an ulcer or eruption which creeps across the skin

**serrated** /sə'reɪtɪd/ *adjective* with a zigzag or saw-like edge

**serration** /sə'reɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* one of the points in a zigzag or serrated edge

**Sertoli cells** /sə'təʊli selz/ *plural noun* cells which support the seminiferous tubules in the tes-

tis [Described 1865. After Enrico Sertoli (1842–1910), Italian histologist, Professor of Experimental Physiology at Milan, Italy.]

**sertraline** /'sɜ:trəli:n/ *noun* an antidepressant drug which extends the action of the neurotransmitter serotonin. It is also used in the treatment of obsessive-compulsive disorder and post-traumatic stress disorder.

**serum** /'sɪərəm/ *noun* **1.** a fluid which separates from clotted blood and is similar to plasma except that it has no clotting agents. Also called **blood serum** **2.** blood serum taken from an animal which has developed antibodies to bacteria, used to give humans temporary immunity to a disease. Also called **antiserum** **3.** any clear watery body fluid, especially a fluid that comes from a serous membrane (NOTE: The plural is **serums** or **sera**.)

**serum albumin** /,sɪərəm'ælbjʊmɪn/ *noun* a major protein in blood plasma

**serum bilirubin** /,sɪərəm'bɪlɪ'ru:bɪn/ *noun* bilirubin in serum, converted from haemoglobin as red blood cells are destroyed

**serum globulin** /,sɪərəm'glɒbjʊlɪn/ *noun* a major protein in blood serum that is an antibody

**serum glutamic-oxalacetic transaminase** /,sɪərəm'glu:tæmɪk'ɒksələsɪ:tɪk træns'æmɪneɪz/ *noun* an enzyme excreted by damaged heart muscle, which appears in the blood of people who have had a heart attack. Abbreviation **SGOT**

**serum glutamic-pyruvic transaminase** /,sɪərəm'glu:tæmɪk paɪ'ru:vɪk træns'æmɪneɪz/ *noun* an enzyme secreted by the parenchymal cells of the liver, occurring in increased amounts in the blood of people with infectious hepatitis. Abbreviation **SGPT**

**serum hepatitis** /,sɪərəm'hɛpə'taɪtɪs/ *noun* a serious form of hepatitis transmitted by infected blood, unsterilised surgical instruments, shared needles or sexual intercourse. Also called **hepatitis B**, **viral hepatitis**

**serum sickness** /'sɪərəm'sɪknəs/ *noun* an allergic reaction to serum therapy which was formerly used as a way of boosting passive immunity

**serum therapy** /'sɪərəm'therəpi/ *noun* the administration of treated serum, often from horses, formerly used as a way of boosting passive immunity

**serve** /sɜ:v/ *verb* **1.** to give a person food or drink ○ *Lunch is served in the ward at 12:30.* **2.** to be useful or helpful to a person or group ○ *The clinic serves the local community well.* **3.** to have a particular effect or result ○ *The letter serves to remind you of your outpatients' appointment.* (NOTE: [all senses] **serves** – **serving** – **served**)

**sesamoid** /'sesəməɪd/, **sesamoid bone** /'sesəməɪd bəʊn/ *noun* any small bony nodule in a tendon, the largest being the kneecap

**severe acute respiratory disorder** /sɪˌvɪə əˌkjuːt riˈspɪrət(ə)rɪ dɪsˌɔːdə/ *noun* full form of **SARS**

**sex** /seks/ *noun* one of two groups, male and female, into which animals and plants can be divided ○ *The sex of a baby can be identified before birth.*

**sexarche** /ˈseksɑːki/ *noun* the age when a person first has sexual intercourse

**sex chromosome** /ˈseks ˌkrəʊməsəʊm/ *noun* a chromosome which determines if a person is male or female

**sex determination** /ˈseks dɪtɜːmɪneɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the way in which the sex of an individual organism is fixed by the number of chromosomes which make up its cell structure

**sex hormone** /ˈseks ˌhɔːməʊn/ *noun* an oestrogen or androgen which promotes the growth of secondary sexual characteristics

**sex-linked** /ˈseks lɪŋkt/ *adjective* referring to genes which are linked to X chromosomes

**sexology** /sekˈsɒlədʒi/ *noun* the study of sex and sexual behaviour

**sextuplet** /ˈseksʃʊplət/ *noun* one of six babies born to a mother at the same time

**sexual** /ˈseksʃuəl/ *adjective* referring to sex

**sexual act** /ˈseksʃuəl ækt/ *noun* an act of sexual intercourse

**sexual deviation** /ˌseksʃuəl diːviːeɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* any sexual behaviour which is not accepted as usual in the society in which you live. Examples in Western society are sadism and voyeurism.

**sexually transmitted disease** /ˌseksʃuəli trænsˌmɪtɪd diːziːz/, **sexually transmitted infection** /ˌseksʃuəli trænsˌmɪtɪd ɪnˈfekʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a disease or infection transmitted from an infected person to another person during sexual intercourse. Abbreviation **STD, STI**

**sexual reproduction** /ˌseksʃuəl ˌriːprəˈdʌkʃən/ *noun* reproduction in which gametes from two individuals fuse together

**SFD** *abbreviation* small for dates

**SGOT** *abbreviation* serum glutamic-oxalacetic transaminase

**SGPT** *abbreviation* serum glutamic-pyruvic transaminase

**SHA** *abbreviation* Strategic Health Authority

**shaft** /ʃɑːft/ *noun* the long central section of a long bone

**shaken baby syndrome** /ˌʃeɪkən ˈbeɪbi ˌsɪndrəʊm/, **shaken infant syndrome** /ˌʃeɪkən ˈɪnfənt ˌsɪndrəʊm/ *noun* a series of internal head injuries in a very young child, caused by being shaken violently. It can result in brain damage leading to speech and learning disabilities, paralysis, seizures and hearing loss, and may be life-threatening.

**shaky** /ˈʃeɪki/ *adjective* feeling weak and unsteady

**share** /ʃeə/ *verb* **1.** to use or do something together with others **2.** to divide something and give parts of it to different people or groups (NOTE: [all verb senses] **shares – sharing – shared**) ■ *noun* a single part of something divided among different people or groups

**shared care** /ˌʃeəd ˈkeə/ *noun* antenatal care given jointly by an obstetrician in a hospital together with a general practitioner or a midwife working in the community

**sharps** /ʃɑːps/ *plural noun* objects with points, e.g. syringes (*informal*)

**sheath** /ʃiːθ/ *noun* **1.** a layer of tissue which surrounds a muscle or a bundle of nerve fibres **2.** same as **condom**

**shiatsu** /ʃiˈætsuː/ *noun* a form of healing massage in which the hands are used to apply pressure at acupuncture points on the body in order to stimulate and redistribute energy

**Shigella** /ʃɪˈɡelə/ *noun* a genus of bacteria which causes dysentery

**shigellosis** /ˌʃɪɡeˈlɔːsɪs/ *noun* infestation of the digestive tract with *Shigella*, causing bacillary dysentery

**shin** /ʃɪn/ *noun* the front part of the lower leg

**shinbone** /ˈʃɪnbəʊn/ *noun* same as **tibia**

**shiner** /ˈʃaɪnə/ *noun* same as **black eye** (*informal*)

**shingles** /ˈʃɪŋɡəlz/ *noun* same as **herpes zoster**

**shin splints** /ˈʃɪn splɪnts/ *plural noun* extremely sharp pains in the front of the lower leg, felt by athletes

**Shirodkar's operation** /ʃɪˈrɒdkɑːz ɒpəˈreɪʃ(ə)n/, **Shirodkar pursestring** /ʃɪˈrɒdkɑːˈpɜːsstrɪŋ/ *noun* a surgical operation to narrow the cervix of the uterus in a woman who experiences habitual abortion in order to prevent another miscarriage, the suture being removed before labour starts. Also called **pursestring operation** [After N. V. Shirodkar (1900–71), Indian obstetrician.]

**Shirodkar suture** /ʃɪˈrɒdkɑːˌsuːtʃəl/ *noun* a type of suture which is placed around a cervix to tighten it during pregnancy and prevent miscarriage. Also called **pursestring stitch**

**shivery** /ˈʃɪvəri/ *adjective* trembling from cold, fear or a medical condition

**shock** /ʃɒk/ *noun* a state of weakness caused by illness or injury that suddenly reduces the blood pressure ○ *The patient went into shock.* ○ *Several of the passengers were treated for shock.* ■ *verb* to give someone an unpleasant surprise, and so put him or her in a state of shock ○ *She was still shocked several hours after the accident.* (NOTE: You say that someone is **in shock**, in a state of **shock** or that they **went into shock**.)

**shock lung** /'ʃɒk lʌŋ/ *noun* a serious condition in which a person's lungs fail to work following a trauma

**shock syndrome** /'ʃɒk ˌsɪndrəʊm/ *noun* a group of symptoms, a pale face, cold skin, low blood pressure and rapid and irregular pulse, which show that someone is in a state of shock. ☞ **anaphylactic shock**

**shock therapy** /'ʃɒk ˌθerəpi/, **shock treatment** /'ʃɒk ˌtri:tmənt/ *noun* a method of treating some mental disorders by giving an anaesthetised patient an electric shock to induce an epileptic convulsion

**shoot** /ʃu:t/ *verb* (of pain) to seem to move suddenly through the body with a piercing feeling ○ *The pain shot down his arm.*

**shooting** /'ʃu:tɪŋ/ *adjective* (of pain) sudden and intense

**short of breath** /ˌʃɔ:t əv 'breθ/ *adjective* unable to breathe quickly enough to supply the oxygen needed ○ *After running up the stairs he was short of breath.*

**shortsighted** /ʃɔ:t'saɪtɪd/ *adjective* same as **myopic**

**shortsightedness** /ʃɔ:t'saɪtɪdnəs/ *noun* same as **myopia**

**shot** /ʃɒt/ *noun* same as **injection** (informal) ○ *The doctor gave her a tetanus shot.* ○ *He needed a shot of morphine to relieve the pain.*

**shoulder** /'ʃəʊldə/ *noun* a joint where the top of the arm joins the main part of the body ○ *He dislocated his shoulder.* ○ *She was complaining of pains in her shoulder or of shoulder pains.*

**shoulder blade** /'ʃəʊldə bleɪd/ *noun* same as **scapula**

**shoulder girdle** /'ʃəʊldə ɡɜ:d(ə)/ *noun* same as **pectoral girdle**

**shoulder joint** /'ʃəʊldə dʒɔɪnt/ *noun* a ball and socket joint which allows the arm to rotate and move in any direction

**shoulder presentation** /'ʃəʊldə ˌprez(ə)n ˌteɪf(ə)n/ *noun* a position of a baby in the uterus, in which the shoulder will first appear

**show** /ʃəʊ/ *noun* the first discharge of blood at the beginning of childbirth ■ *verb* 1. to cause or allow something to be visible 2. to provide convincing evidence of something

**shunt** /ʃʌnt/ *noun* the passing of fluid through a channel which is not the usual one ■ *verb* (of blood) to pass through a channel which is not the usual one ○ *As much as 5% of venous blood can be shunted oxygenated back to the arteries.*

**shunting** /'ʃʌntɪŋ/ *noun* a condition in which some of the deoxygenated blood in the lungs does not come into contact with air, and full gas exchange does not take place

**SI** *abbreviation* the international system of metric measurements. Full form **Système International**

**sial-** /saɪəl/ *prefix* same as **sialo-** (used before vowels)

**sialadenitis** /ˌsaɪəlˌædɪˈnaɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of a salivary gland. Also called **sialoadenitis**, **sialitis**

**sialitis** /ˌsaɪəlˈlaɪtɪs/ *noun* same as **sialadenitis**

**sialo-** /saɪələʊ/ *prefix* 1. referring to saliva 2. referring to a salivary gland

**sialoadenitis** /ˌsaɪələʊˌædɪˈnaɪtɪs/ *noun* same as **sialadenitis**

**sialography** /ˌsaɪəlˌɒgrəfi/ *noun* X-ray examination of a salivary gland. Also called **ptyalography**

**sialolith** /saɪˈæləlɪθ/ *noun* a stone in a salivary gland. Also called **ptyalith**

**sialorrhoea** /ˌsaɪələʊˈri:ə/ *noun* the production of an excessive amount of saliva (NOTE: The US spelling is **sialorrhoea**.)

**Siamese twins** /saɪəmi:z ˈtʍɪnz/ *plural noun* same as **conjoined twins**

**sib** /sɪb/ *noun* same as **sibling** (informal)

**sibling** /'sɪblɪŋ/ *noun* a brother or sister

**sick** /sɪk/ *adjective* 1. having an illness ○ *He was sick for two weeks.* □ **to report or call in sick** to say officially that you are unwell and cannot work 2. about to vomit ○ *The patient got up this morning and felt sick.* □ **to be sick** to vomit ○ *The child was sick all over the floor.* □ **to make someone sick** to cause someone to vomit ○ *He was given something to make him sick.*

**sick building syndrome** /ˌsɪk ˈbɪldɪŋ ˌsɪndrəʊm/ *noun* a condition in which many people working in a building feel ill or have headaches, caused by blocked air-conditioning ducts in which stale air is recycled round the building, often carrying allergenic substances or bacteria (informal)

**sickle cell** /'sɪk(ə)l sel/ *noun* a red blood cell shaped like a sickle, formed as a result of the presence of an unusual form of haemoglobin. Also called **drepanocyte**

**sickle-cell anaemia** /'sɪk(ə)l sel əˌni:miə/ *noun* an inherited condition in which many people develops sickle cells which block the circulation, causing anaemia and pains in the joints and abdomen. Also called **drepanocytosis**, **sickle cell disease**

COMMENT: Sickle-cell anaemia is a hereditary condition which is mainly found in people from Africa and the West Indies.

**sickle-cell chest syndrome** /ˌsɪk(ə)l sel ˈtʃest ˌsɪndrəʊm/ *noun* a common complication of sickle-cell disease, with chest pain, fever and leucocytosis

**sickle-cell disease** /'sɪk(ə)l sel dɪˌzi:z/ *noun* abbreviation **SCD**. Same as **sickle-cell anaemia**

**sickle-cell trait** /'sɪk(ə)l sel ˌtreɪt/ *noun* a hereditary condition of the blood in which some

red cells become sickle-shaped, but there are not enough affected cells to cause anaemia

**side-effect** /'saɪd ɪ'fekt/ *noun* an effect produced by a drug or treatment which is not the main effect intended ○ *One of the side-effects of chemotherapy is that the patient's hair falls out.*

**sidero-** /saɪdərəʊ/ *prefix* referring to iron

**sideropenia** /,saɪdərəʊ'pi:niə/ *noun* a lack of iron in the blood usually caused by insufficient iron in the diet

**siderophilin** /,saɪdə'rfɪlɪn/ *noun* same as **transferrin**

**siderosis** /,saɪdə'rəʊsɪs/ *noun* a condition in which iron deposits form in tissue

**SIDS** *abbreviation* sudden infant death syndrome

**sigmoid** /'sɪgmɔɪd/ *adjective* 1. shaped like the letter S 2. referring to the sigmoid colon ■ *noun* same as **sigmoid colon**

**sigmoid colon** /,sɪgmɔɪd 'kəʊlɒn/ *noun* the fourth section of the colon which continues as the rectum. See illustration at **DIGESTIVE SYSTEM** in Supplement. Also called **pelvic colon**, **sigmoid**, **sigmoid flexure**

**sigmoidectomy** /,sɪgmɔɪ'dektəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to remove the sigmoid colon (NOTE: The plural is **sigmoidectomies**.)

**sigmoid flexure** /,sɪgmɔɪd 'flekʃə/ *noun* same as **sigmoid colon**

**sigmoidoscope** /sɪg'mɔɪdəskəʊp/ *noun* a surgical instrument with a light at the end which can be passed into the rectum so that the sigmoid colon can be examined

**sigmoidoscopy** /,sɪgmɔɪ'dɒskəpi/ *noun* a procedure in which the rectum and sigmoid colon are examined with a sigmoidoscope

**sigmoidostomy** /,sɪgmɔɪ'dɒstəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to bring the sigmoid colon out through a hole in the abdominal wall (NOTE: The plural is **sigmoidostomies**.)

**sign** /saɪn/ *noun* a movement, mark, colouring or change which has a meaning and can be recognised by a doctor as indicating a condition (NOTE: A change in function which is also noticed by the patient is a **symptom**.)

**sign language** /'saɪn ,kæŋgwɪdʒ/ *noun* a set of agreed signs made with the fingers and hands, used to indicate words by or for people who cannot hear or speak

**sildenafil citrate** /,sɪldənəfɪl 'saɪtreɪt/ *noun* an enzyme-inhibiting drug used in the treatment of male impotence

**silicon** /'sɪlɪkən/ *noun* a non-metallic chemical element (NOTE: The chemical symbol is **Si**.)

**silicosis** /,sɪlɪ'kəʊsɪs/ *noun* a disease of the lungs caused by inhaling silica dust from mining or stone-crushing operations

**silver nitrate** /,sɪlvə 'naɪtreɪt/ *noun* a salt of silver that is mixed with a cream or solution and used, e.g., to disinfect burns or to kill warts

**Simmonds' disease** /'sɪmɒndz dɪ,zɪ:z/ *noun* a condition of women due to postpartum haemorrhage, in which there is lack of activity in the pituitary gland, resulting in wasting of tissue, brittle bones and premature senility [Described 1914. After Morris Simmonds (1855–1925), German physician and pathologist.]

**simple fracture** /,sɪmpəl 'fræktʃə/ *noun* a fracture where the skin surface around the damaged bone has not been broken and the broken ends of the bone are close together. Also called **closed fracture**

**simple tachycardia** /,sɪmpəl ,tæki'kɑ:diə/ *noun* same as **sinus tachycardia**

**simplex** /'sɪmpleks/ ♦ **herpes simplex**

**Sims' position** /'sɪmz pə,zɪf(ə)n/ *noun* a position of the body in which the person lies on his or her left side with their left arm behind their back and their right knee and thigh flexed. It is used to allow the anal or vaginal area to be examined easily.

**simvastatin** /sɪm'væstɪn/ *noun* a drug which lowers lipid levels in the blood, used in the treatment of high cholesterol

**sinew** /'sɪnju:z/ *noun* same as **tendon**

**singer's nodule** /,sɪŋəʒ 'nɒdju:l/ *noun* a small white polyp which can develop in the larynx of people who use their voice too much or too loudly

**singultus** /sɪŋ'gʌltəs/ *noun* same as **hiccup**

**sino-** /saɪnəʊ/ *prefix* referring to a sinus

**sinoatrial** /,saɪnəʊ'eɪtriəl/ *adjective* relating to the sinus venosus and the right atrium of the heart

**sinoatrial node** /,saɪnəʊ'eɪtriəl nɒd/ *noun* a node in the heart at the junction of the superior vena cava and the right atrium, which regulates the heartbeat. Also called **SA node**, **sinus node**

**sinogram** /'saɪnəʊgræm/ *noun* an X-ray photograph of a sinus

**sinography** /saɪ'nɒgrəfi/ *noun* examination of a sinus by taking an X-ray photograph

**sinu-** /saɪnə/ *prefix* same as **sino-**

**sinuatrial** /,saɪnə'eɪtriəl/ *adjective* same as **sinoatrial**

**sinus** /'saɪnəs/ *noun* a cavity inside the body, including the cavities inside the head behind the cheekbone, forehead and nose ○ *The doctor diagnosed a sinus infection.*

**sinusitis** /,saɪnə'saɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the mucous membrane in the sinuses, especially the maxillary sinuses

**sinusoid** /'saɪnəsɔɪd/ *noun* a specially shaped small blood vessel in the liver, adrenal glands and other organs

**sinus tachycardia** /ˌsaɪnəs ˈtækiˈkɑːdiə/ *noun* rapid beating of the heart caused by stimulation of the sinoatrial node. Also called **simple tachycardia**

**sinus trouble** /ˌsaɪnəs ˌtrʌb(ə)/ *noun* same as **sinusitis** (*informal*)

**sinus venosus** /ˌsaɪnəs vəˈnɒsɪs/ *noun* a cavity in the heart of an embryo, part of which develops into the coronary sinus and part of which is absorbed into the right atrium

**siphonage** /ˈsaɪfənɪdʒ/ *noun* the removal of liquid from one place to another with a tube, as used to empty the stomach of its contents

**sit** /sɪt/ *verb* **1.** to rest with your weight largely supported by the buttocks **2.** to cause a person to sit somewhere (NOTE: [all senses] **sitting – sat**)

**situs inversus** /ˌsaɪtəs ɪnˈvɜːsəs/, **situs inversus viscerum** /ˌsaɪtəs ɪnˈvɜːsəs ˈvɪsərəm/ *noun* a congenital condition, in which the organs are not on the usual side of the body, i.e. where the heart is on the right side and the left

**sitz bath** /ˈsɪts bɑːθ/ *noun* a small low bath where someone can sit, but not lie down

**SI units** /ˌes ˈaɪ ˌjuːnɪts/ *plural noun* the units used in an international system of units for measuring physical properties such as weight, speed and light

**skatole** /ˈskætəʊl/ *noun* another spelling of **scatole**

**skeletal** /ˈskelɪt(ə)/ *adjective* referring to the skeleton

**skeletal muscle** /ˈskelɪt(ə)l ˌmʌs(ə)/ *noun* a muscle attached to a bone, which makes a limb move

**skeleton** /ˈskelɪt(ə)n/ *noun* all the bones which make up a body

**skia-** /skaɪə/ *prefix* referring to shadow

**skier's thumb** /ˌskiːəz ˈθʌm/ *noun* an injury to the thumb caused by falling directly onto it when it is outstretched, resulting in tearing or stretching of the ligaments of the main thumb joint

**skill** /skɪl/ *noun* an ability to do difficult work, which is acquired by training ○ *You need special skills to become a doctor.*

**skill mix** /ˈskɪl mɪks/ *noun* the range of different skills possessed by the members of a group or required for a particular job

**skin** /skɪn/ *noun* the tissue which forms the outside surface of the body ○ *His skin turned brown in the sun.* ○ *Skin problems in adolescents may be caused by diet.* (NOTE: For other terms referring to skin, see words beginning with **cut-**, **derm-**, **derma-**, **dermato-**, **dermo-**.)

**skin graft** /ˈskɪn grɑːft/ *noun* a layer of skin transplanted from one part of the body to cover an area where the skin has been destroyed ○ *After the operation she had to have a skin graft.*

**skull** /skʌl/ *noun* the eight bones which are fused or connected together to form the head, along with the fourteen bones which form the face. Also called **cranium**

**SLE** *abbreviation* systemic lupus erythematosus **sleep** /sliːp/ *noun* the state or a period of resting, usually at night, when the eyes are closed and you are not conscious of what is happening ○ *You need to get a good night's sleep if you have a lot of work to do tomorrow.* ○ *He had a short sleep in the middle of the afternoon.*

**sleep apnoea** /ˈsliːp æpˌniːə/ *noun* a condition related to heavy snoring, with prolonged respiratory pauses leading to cerebral hypoxia and subsequent daytime drowsiness

**sleeping sickness** /ˈsliːpɪŋ ˌsɪknəs/ *noun* an African disease, spread by the tsetse fly, where trypanosomes infest the blood. Also called **African trypanosomiasis**

**sleeping tablet** /ˈsliːpɪŋ ˌtæblət/ *noun* a tablet containing a drug, usually a barbiturate, which makes a person sleep

**sleepwalker** /ˈsliːpwɔːkə/ *noun* same as **somnambulist**

**sleepwalking** /ˈsliːpwɔːkɪŋ/ *noun* same as **somnambulism**

**sliding sheet** /ˌslaɪdɪŋ ˈʃiːt/ *noun* a silicon-coated nylon sheet used for transferring and repositioning patients

**sling** /slɪŋ/ *noun* a triangular bandage attached round the neck, used to support an injured arm and prevent it from moving ○ *She had her left arm in a sling.*

**slipped disc** /ˌslipt ˈdɪsk/ *noun* same as **prolapsed intervertebral disc**

**slit lamp** /ˈslɪt læmp/ *noun* a piece of equipment which provides a narrow beam of light and is connected to a special microscope, used to examine the eye

**slough** /sloʊ/ *noun* dead tissue, especially dead skin, which has separated from healthy tissue ■ *verb* to lose dead skin which falls off

**slow-release vitamin tablet** /ˌsləʊ rɪˌliːs ˈvɪtəmɪn ˌtæblət/ *noun* a vitamin tablet which will dissolve slowly in the body and give a longer and more constant effect

**small for dates** /ˌsmɔːl fə ˈdeɪts/ *adjective* referring to an unborn baby which is small in comparison to the average size for that number of weeks. Abbreviation **SFD**

**small intestine** /ˌsmɔːl ɪnˈtestɪn/ *noun* a section of the intestine from the stomach to the caecum, consisting of the duodenum, the jejunum and the ileum

**small of the back** /ˌsmɔːl əv ðə ˈbæk/ *noun* the middle part of the back between and below the shoulder blades

**smallpox** /ˈsmɔːlpɒks/ *noun* a very serious, usually fatal, contagious disease caused by the

pox virus, with a severe rash, leaving masses of small scars on the skin. Also called **variola**

**smear** /smɪə/ *noun* a sample of soft tissue, e.g. blood or mucus, taken from a person and spread over a glass slide to be examined under a microscope

**smear test** /'smɪə test/ *noun* same as **Papanicolaou test**

**smegma** /'smɛgmə/ *noun* an oily secretion with an unpleasant smell which collects on and under the foreskin of the penis

**Smith-Petersen nail** /,smɪθ 'pi:təs(ə)n neɪl/ *noun* a metal nail used to attach the fractured neck of a femur [Described 1931. After Marius Nygaard Smith-Petersen (1886–1953), Norwegian-born Boston orthopaedic surgeon.]

**Smith's fracture** /'smɪθs ,fræktʃə/ *noun* a fracture of the radius just above the wrist

**smoke inhalation** /'sməʊk ɪnhə,leɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the breathing in of smoke, as in a fire

**smoking** /'sməʊkɪŋ/ *noun* the action of smoking a cigarette, pipe or cigar ○ *Smoking can injure your health.*

**smooth** /smu:ð/ *adjective* flat, not rough ■ *verb* to make something smooth ○ *She smoothed down the sheets on the bed.*

**smooth muscle** /'smu:ð ,mæs(ə)l/ *noun* a type of muscle found in involuntary muscles. Also called **unstriated muscle**

**SMR** *abbreviation* submucous resection

**snare** /sneə/ *noun* a surgical instrument made of a loop of wire, used to remove growths without the need of an incision

**sneeze** /sni:z/ *noun* a reflex action to blow air suddenly out of the nose and mouth because of irritation in the nasal passages ○ *She gave a loud sneeze.* ■ *verb* to blow air suddenly out of the nose and mouth because of irritation in the nasal passages ○ *The smell of flowers makes her sneeze.* ○ *He was coughing and sneezing and decided to stay in bed.* (NOTE: **sneezing** – sneezed)

**Snellen chart** /'snelən tʃɑ:t/ *noun* a chart commonly used by opticians to test eyesight [Described 1862. After Hermann Snellen (1834–1908), Dutch ophthalmologist.]

**sniffles** /'snɪf(ə)lz/ *plural noun* a slight head cold, or an allergy that causes a running nose (*informal; used to children*) ○ *Don't go out into the cold when you have the sniffles.*

**snoring** /'snɔ:ɪŋ/ *noun* noisy breathing while asleep

**snow blindness** /'snəʊ ,blaɪndnəs/ *noun* temporary painful blindness caused by bright sunlight shining on snow

**snuffles** /'snʌf(ə)lz/ *plural noun* the condition of breathing noisily through a nose which is blocked with mucus, which is usually a symptom

of the common cold, but can sometimes be a sign of congenital syphilis (*informal; used to children*)

**social** /'səʊʃ(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to society or to groups of people

**socialisation** /,səʊʃ(ə)laɪ'zeɪʃ(ə)n/, **socialization** *noun* the process involved when young children are becoming aware of society and learning how they are expected to behave

**social services** /,səʊʃ(ə)l 'sɜ:vɪsɪz/ *plural noun* the special facilities which the government or local authorities provide to people in the community who need help, such as the elderly, children whose parents have died or the unemployed

**social worker** /'səʊʃ(ə)l ,wɜ:kə/ *noun* a government employee who works to provide social services to people in need and improve their living standards

**society** /sə'saɪətɪ/ *noun* **1.** the community of people who live in a particular country and share its institutions and customs **2.** an organisation of people who have a shared interest

**sociology** /,səʊsɪ'ɒlədʒi/ *noun* **1.** the study of the origin, development and structure of human societies and the behaviour of individual people and groups in society **2.** the study of a particular social institution and the part it plays in society

**sociopath** /'səʊsɪəpəθ/ *noun* same as **psychopath**

**socket** /'sɒkɪt/ *noun* a hollow part in a bone, into which another bone or organ fits ○ *The tip of the femur fits into a socket in the pelvis.*

**sodium** /'səʊdiəm/ *noun* a chemical element which is the basic substance in salt (NOTE: The chemical symbol is **Na**.)

**sodium balance** /'səʊdiəm ,bæləns/ *noun* the balance maintained in the body between salt lost in sweat and urine and salt taken in from food. The balance is regulated by aldosterone.

**sodium bicarbonate** /,səʊdiəm baɪ 'kɑ:bənət/ *noun* sodium salt used in cooking, and also as a relief for indigestion and acidity. Also called **bicarbonate of soda**

**sodium fusidate** /,səʊdiəm 'fju:ɪdɪt/ *noun* an antibiotic used mainly to treat penicillin-resistant staphylococcal infections

**sodium pump** /'səʊdiəm pʌmp/ *noun* a cellular process in which sodium is immediately excreted from any cell which it enters and potassium is brought in

**sodium valproate** /,səʊdiəm væl'prəʊɪt/ *noun* an anticonvulsant drug used especially to treat migraines, seizures and epilepsy

**soft** /sɒft/ *adjective* not hard or not resistant to pressure

**soft chancre** /,sɒft 'ʃæŋkə/ *noun* same as **soft sore**

**soft palate** /,sɒft 'pælət/ *noun* the back part of the palate leading to the uvula. ◊ **cleft palate**

**soft sore** /,sɒft 'sɔː/ *noun* a venereal sore with a soft base, situated in the groin or on the genitals and caused by the bacterium *Haemophilus ducreyi*. Also called **chancroid**, **soft chancre**

**soft tissue** /,sɒft 'tɪʃuː/ *noun* skin, muscles, ligaments or tendons

**solar plexus** /,səʊlə 'pleksəs/ *noun* a nerve network situated at the back of the abdomen between the adrenal glands

**solar retinopathy** /,səʊlə reti'nɒpəθi/ *noun* irreparable damage to the most sensitive part of the retina, the macula, caused by looking at the sun with no protection or inadequate protection, as when looking at an eclipse of the sun

**soleus** /'səʊliəs/ *noun* a flat muscle which goes down the calf of the leg (NOTE: The plural is **solei**.)

**solids** /'sɒlɪdz/ *noun* solid food

**soluble** /'sɒljʊb(ə)/ *adjective* able to dissolve  
○ a tablet of soluble aspirin

**soluble fibre** /,sɒljʊb(ə)l 'faɪbə/ *noun* a fibre in vegetables, fruit and pulses and porridge oats which is partly digested in the intestine and reduces the absorption of fats and sugar into the body, so lowering the level of cholesterol

**solute** /'sɒljuːt/ *noun* a solid substance which is dissolved in a solvent to make a solution

**solution** /sə'luːʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a mixture of a solid substance dissolved in a liquid

**solvent** /'sɒlv(ə)nt/ *noun* a liquid in which a solid substance can be dissolved

**solvent abuse** /'sɒlvənt ə,bjuːs/, **solvent inhalation** /,sɒlvənt ,ɪnhə'leɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a type of drug abuse in which someone inhales the toxic fumes given off by particular types of volatile chemical. Also called **glue-sniffing**

**soma** /'səʊmə/ *noun* the body, as opposed to the mind (NOTE: The plural is **somata** or **somas**.)

**somat-** /səʊmət/ *prefix* same as **somato-** (used before vowels)

**somata** /'səʊmətə/ *plural noun* plural of **soma**

**somatic** /səʊ'mætɪk/ *adjective* referring to the body, either as opposed to the mind, or as opposed to the intestines and inner organs. Compare **psychosomatic**

**somato-** /səʊmətəʊ/ *prefix* referring to the body

**somatostatin** /,səʊmətəʊ'stætɪn/ *noun* a hormone produced in the hypothalamus which helps to prevent the release of the growth hormone

**somatotropic hormone** /,səʊmətə'trɒfɪk 'hɔːməʊn/, **somatotrophin** /,səʊmətə'trɒfɪn/ *noun* a growth hormone, secreted by the pituitary gland, which stimulates the growth of long bones

**somatropin** /,səʊmə'trəʊpɪn/ *noun* same as **growth hormone**

**-some** /səʊm/ *suffix* tiny cell bodies

**somnambulism** /sɒm'næmbjʊlɪz(ə)m/ *noun* a condition especially affecting children where the person gets up and walks about while still asleep. Also called **sleepwalking**

**somnambulist** /sɒm'næmbjʊlɪst/ *noun* a person who walks in his or her sleep. Also called **sleepwalker**

**somnolent** /'sɒmnələnt/ *adjective* sleepy

**somnolism** /'sɒmnəlɪz(ə)m/ *noun* a trance which is induced by hypnotism

**Somogyi effect** /'sɒmədʒi ɪ,fekt/, **Somogyi phenomenon** /'sɒmədʒi fɪ,nɒmə'nɒn/ *noun* in diabetes mellitus, a swing to a high level of glucose in the blood from an extremely low level, usually occurring after an untreated insulin reaction during the night. It is caused by the release of stress hormones to counter low glucose levels.

**-somy** /səʊmi/ *suffix* the presence of chromosomes

**son** /sʌn/ *noun* a male child of a parent ○ *They have two sons and one daughter.*

**Sonne dysentery** /'sɒnə ,dɪsən'tri/ *noun* a common form of mild dysentery in the UK, caused by *Shigella sonnei* [Described 1915. After Carl Olaf Sonne (1882–1948), Danish bacteriologist and physician.]

**sonogram** /'səʊnəgræm/ *noun* a chart produced using ultrasound waves to find where something is situated in the body

**sonography** /sə'nɒgrəfi/ *noun* same as **ultra-sonography**

**sonotopography** /,səʊnətə'pɒgrəfi/ *noun* the use of ultrasound waves to produce a sonogram

**soaporific** /,sɒpə'rifɪk/ *noun* a drug which makes a person go to sleep ■ *adjective* causing sleep

**sorbitol** /'sɔːbɪtɒl/ *noun* a white crystalline sweet alcohol which is used as a sweetener and a moisturiser, and in the manufacture of Vitamin C

**sordes** /'sɔːdɪz/ *plural noun* dry deposits round the lips of someone who has a fever

**sore** /sɔː/ *noun* a small wound on any part of the skin, usually with a discharge of pus ■ *adjective*  
**1.** rough and inflamed ○ *a sore patch on the skin*  
**2.** painful ○ *My ankle still feels very sore.*

**sore throat** /,sɔː 'θrəʊt/ *noun* a condition in which the mucous membrane in the throat is inflamed, sometimes because the person has been talking too much, but usually because of an infection (*informal*)

**s.o.s.** *adverb* (on prescriptions) if necessary. Full form **si opus sit** (NOTE: It means that the dose should be taken once.)

**sotalol** /'sɒtəlɒl/ *noun* a drug used to treat an irregular heartbeat and high blood pressure

**souffle** /'suːf(ə)/ *noun* a soft breathing sound, heard through a stethoscope

**sound** /saʊnd/ *noun* **1.** something which can be heard ○ *The doctor listened to the sounds of the patient's lungs.* ○ *His breathing made a whistling sound.* **2.** a long rod, used to examine or to dilate the inside of a cavity in the body ■ *verb* to examine the inside of a cavity using a rod

**spansule** /ˈspænsju:l/ *noun* a drug in the form of a capsule which is specially designed to release its contents slowly in the stomach

**spasm** /ˈspæz(ə)m/ *noun* a sudden, usually painful, involuntary contraction of a muscle, as in cramp ○ *The muscles in his leg went into spasm.* ○ *She had painful spasms in her stomach.*

**spasmo-** /spæzməʊl/ *prefix* referring to a spasm

**spasmodic** /spæzˈmɒdɪk/ *adjective* occurring in spasms

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**spasmodic** /spæzˈmɒdɪk/ *adjective* occurring in spasms

**spatula** /ˈspætjʊlə/ *noun* **1.** a flat flexible tool with a handle, used to scoop, lift, spread or mix things **2.** a flat wooden stick used to press the tongue down when the mouth or throat is being examined

**special care baby unit** /ˌspeʃ(ə)l keə ˈbeɪbi ˌju:nɪt/ *noun* a unit in a hospital which deals with premature babies or babies with serious disorders

**special health authority** /ˌspeʃ(ə)l ˈhelθ ɔ: ˌθɔ:riːti/ *noun* a health authority which has unique national functions, or covers various regions. An example is UK Transplant, which manages the National Transplant Database and provides a 24-hour service for the matching and allocation of donor organs.

**special hospital** /ˌspeʃ(ə)l ˈhɒspɪt(ə)l/ *noun* a hospital for people whose mental condition

makes them a potential danger to themselves and/or others

**specialise** /ˈspeʃəlaɪz/, **specialize** *verb* **1.** to concentrate on a specific subject or activity **2.** to be an expert in a specific subject or area of knowledge (NOTE: **specialising** – **specialised**)

**specialised** /ˈspeʃəlaɪzd/, **specialized** *adjective* **1.** designed for a particular purpose **2.** concentrating on a particular activity or subject ○ *specialised skills*

**specialist registrar** /ˌspeʃ(ə)lɪst ˈredʒɪ ˈstrɑ:z/ *noun* a junior doctor in a hospital who is doing further specialist training

**speciality** /ˌspeʃiˈæləti/ *noun* a particular activity or type of work which someone is specially trained for or very interested in. Also called **specialism**, **specialty**

**special school** /ˈspeʃ(ə)l sku:l/ *noun* a school for children with disabilities

**specialty** /ˈspeʃ(ə)lɪti/ *noun* US same as **speciality**

**species** /ˈspi:ʃi:z/ *noun* a group of living things with the same characteristics and which can interbreed (NOTE: The plural is **species**.)

**specific** /spəˈsɪfɪk/ *adjective* referring to a disease caused by one type of microorganism only. Opposite **non-specific** ■ *noun* a drug which is only used to treat one disease

**specific gravity** /spəˈsɪfɪk ˈgrævɪti/ *noun* same as **relative density**

**specificity** /ˌspeʃiˈfɪsəti/ *noun* the rate of negative responses in a test from persons free from a disease. A high specificity means a low rate of false positives. Compare **sensitivity**

**specific urethritis** /spəˈsɪfɪk ʤuəriˈθraɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the urethra caused by gonorrhoea

**specimen** /ˈspesɪmɪn/ *noun* a small quantity of something given for testing ○ *He was asked to bring a urine specimen.*

**spectacles** /ˈspektək(ə)lz/ *plural noun* glasses which are worn in front of the eyes to help correct problems in vision

**spectrography** /spekˈtrɒɡrəfi/ *noun* the recording of a spectrum on photographic film

**spectroscope** /ˈspektrəskəʊp/ *noun* an instrument used to analyse a spectrum

**spectrum** /ˈspektrəm/ *noun* **1.** the range of colours, from red to violet, into which white light can be split when it is passed through something (NOTE: Different substances in solution have different spectra.) **2.** the range of organisms that an antibiotic or chemical can kill (NOTE: The plural is **spectra** or **spectrums**.) □ **broad-spectrum antibiotic** an antibiotic which kills a large number of different organisms □ **narrow-spectrum antibiotic** an antibiotic which is targeted at a few particular organisms



**speculum** /'spɛkjʊləm/ *noun* a surgical instrument which is inserted into an opening in the body such as a nostril or the vagina to keep it open in order to allow a doctor to examine the inside (NOTE: The plural is **specula** or **speculums**.)

**speech** /spi:tʃ/ *noun* **1.** the ability to make intelligible sounds with the vocal cords **2.** a talk given to an audience

**speech block** /'spi:tʃ blɒk/ *noun* a temporary inability to speak, caused by the effect of nervous stress on the mental processes

**speech impediment** /'spi:tʃ ɪm,pɛdɪmənt/ *noun* an inability to speak easily or in the usual way because of the physical structure of the mouth or other disorders

**speech therapist** /'spi:tʃ ,θerəpɪst/ *noun* a qualified person who practises speech therapy

**speech therapy** /'spi:tʃ ,θerəpɪ/ *noun* treatment for a speech disorder such as stammering or one which results from a stroke or physical malformation

**sperm** /spɜ:m/ *noun* same as **spermatozoon** (NOTE: The plural is **sperm**.)

**spermat-** /spɜ:mət/ *prefix* same as **spermato-** (used before vowels)

**spermatik** /spɜ:'mætɪk/ *adjective* referring to sperm

**spermatik artery** /spɜ:m,ætɪk 'ɑ:təri/ *noun* an artery which leads into the testes. Also called **testicular artery**

**spermatik cord** /spɜ:m,ætɪk 'kɔ:d/ *noun* a cord running from the testis to the abdomen carrying the vas deferens, the blood vessels, nerves and lymphatics of the testis

**spermatid** /'spɜ:mətɪd/ *noun* an immature male sex cell that develops into a spermatozoon

**spermato-** /spɜ:mətəʊ/ *prefix* **1.** referring to sperm **2.** referring to the male reproductive system

**spermatocèle** /'spɜ:mətəsi:l/ *noun* a cyst which forms in the scrotum

**spermatogenesis** /,spɜ:mətə'dʒenəsis/ *noun* the formation and development of spermatozoa in the testes

**spermatorrhœa** /,spɜ:mətə'rɪə/ *noun* the discharge of a large amount of semen frequently and without an orgasm (NOTE: The US spelling is **spermatorrhœa**.)

**spermatozoon** /,spɜ:mətə'zəʊn/ *noun* a mature male sex cell, which is ejaculated from the penis and is capable of fertilising an ovum. Also called **sperm** (NOTE: The plural is **spermatozoa**.)

**spermaturia** /,spɜ:mət'juəriə/ *noun* sperm in the urine

**sperm bank** /'spɜ:m bæŋk/ *noun* a place where sperm can be stored for use in artificial insemination

**sperm count** /'spɜ:m kaʊnt/ *noun* a calculation of the number of sperm in a quantity of semen

**sperm donor** /'spɜ:m ,dəʊnə/ *noun* a male who gives sperm, for a fee, to allow a childless woman to bear a child

**spermi-** /spɜ:mi/ *prefix* referring to sperm and semen

**spermicidal** /,spɜ:mɪ'saɪd(ə)/ *adjective* killing or able to kill sperm

**spermicidal jelly** /,spɜ:mɪ'saɪd(ə)l 'dʒɛli/ *noun* a jelly-like product which acts as a contraceptive

**spermicide** /'spɜ:mɪ'saɪd/ *noun* a substance which kills sperm

**spermi-** /spɜ:miəʊ/ *prefix* same as **spermi-**

**spermiogenesis** /,spɜ:miəʊ'dʒenəsis/ *noun* the stage of spermatogenesis during which a spermatid changes into a spermatozoon

**spheno-** /sfi:nəʊ/ *prefix* referring to the sphenoid bone

**sphenoid** /'sfi:nɔɪd/ *adjective* **1.** relating to the sphenoid bone **2.** shaped like a wedge ■ *noun* same as **sphenoid bone**

**sphenoid bone** /'sfi:nɔɪd bæʊn/ *noun* one of two bones in the skull which form the side of the socket of the eye. Also called **sphenoid**

**sphenoid sinus** /,sfi:nɔɪd 'saɪnəs/ *noun* one of the sinuses in the skull behind the nasal passage

**spherocyte** /'sfɪərəʊsaɪt/ *noun* a red blood cell that is round rather than the usual disc shape

**spherocytosis** /,sfɪərəʊsaɪt'əʊsɪs/ *noun* a condition in which someone has spherocytes in the blood, causing anaemia, enlarged spleen and gallstones, as in acholuric jaundice

**sphincter** /'sfɪŋktə/, **sphincter muscle** /'sfɪŋktə ,mʌs(ə)/ *noun* a circular band of muscle which surrounds an opening or passage in the body, especially the anus, and can narrow or close the opening or passage by contracting

**sphincterectomy** /,sfɪŋktə'rektəmi/ *noun* **1.** a surgical operation to remove a sphincter **2.** a surgical operation to remove part of the edge of the iris in the eye (NOTE: The plural is **sphincterectomies**.)

**sphincteroplasty** /'sfɪŋktərə,plæsti/ *noun* a surgical operation to relieve a tightened sphincter (NOTE: The plural is **sphincteroplasties**.)

**sphincterotomy** /,sfɪŋktə'rɒtəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to make an incision into a sphincter (NOTE: The plural is **sphincterotomies**.)

**sphyg** /sfɪg/ *noun* same as **sphygmomanometer** (informal)

**sphygmo-** /sfɪgməʊ/ *prefix* referring to the pulse

**sphygmocardiograph** /ˌsfɪgməʊ  
 'kɑ:diəʊgrɑ:f/ *noun* a device which records  
 heartbeats and pulse rate

**sphygmograph** /ˌsfɪgməgrɑ:f/ *noun* a device  
 which records the pulse

**sphygmomanometer** /ˌsfɪgməʊmə'nɒmɪtə/  
*noun* an instrument which measures blood pres-  
 sure in the arteries

**spica** /'spɪkə/ *noun* a way of bandaging a joint  
 where the bandage crosses over itself like the fig-  
 ure 8 on the inside of the bend of the joint (NOTE:  
 The plural is **spicae** or **spicas**.)

**spicule** /'spɪkjʊ:l/ *noun* a small splinter of bone

**spigot** /'spɪgət/ *noun* the end of a pipe which is  
 joined by insertion into the enlarged end of  
 another pipe

**spina** /'spɪnə/ *noun* **1.** a thin sharp piece of  
 bone **2.** the vertebral column

**spina bifida** /ˌspɪnə 'bɪfɪdə/ *noun* a serious  
 condition in which part of the spinal cord pro-  
 trudes through the spinal column. Also called  
**rachischisis**

**spinal** /'spɪn(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to the  
 spine ○ *She suffered spinal injuries in the crash.*

**spinal accessory nerve** /ˌspɪn(ə)l ək  
 'sesəri nɜ:v/ *noun* the eleventh cranial nerve  
 which supplies the muscles in the neck and shoul-  
 ders

**spinal anaesthesia** /ˌspɪn(ə)l ,ænəs'ti:ziə/  
*noun* local anaesthesia in which an anaesthetic is  
 injected into the cerebrospinal fluid

**spinal anaesthetic** /ˌspɪn(ə)l ,ænəs'tetɪk/  
*noun* an anaesthetic given by injection into the  
 spine, which results in large parts of the body los-  
 ing the sense of feeling

**spinal block** /ˌspɪn(ə)l 'blɒk/ *noun* analgesia  
 produced by injecting the spinal cord with an  
 anaesthetic

**spinal canal** /ˌspɪn(ə)l kə'næl/ *noun* the hol-  
 low channel running down the back of the verte-  
 brae, containing the spinal cord. Also called **ver-  
 tebral canal**

**spinal column** /'spɪn(ə)l kɒləm/ *noun* same  
 as **spine**

**spinal cord** /'spɪn(ə)l kɔ:d/ *noun* part of the  
 central nervous system, running from the medulla  
 oblongata to the filum terminale, in the vertebral  
 canal of the spine (NOTE: For other terms refer-  
 ring to the spinal cord, see words beginning with  
**myel-**, **myelo-**)

**spinal curvature** /ˌspɪn(ə)l 'kɜ:vətʃə/ *noun*  
 unusual bending of the spinal column

**spinal fusion** /ˌspɪn(ə)l 'fɜ:jʊ:ʒ(ə)n/ *noun*  
 a surgical operation to join two vertebrae together  
 to make the spine more rigid. Also called **spond-  
 ylosynchysis**

**spinal ganglion** /ˌspɪn(ə)l 'gæŋgliən/ *noun*  
 a cone-shaped mass of cells on the posterior root,

the main axons of which form the posterior root  
 of the spinal nerve

**spinal nerve** /'spɪn(ə)l nɜ:v/ *noun* one of the  
 31 pairs of nerves which lead from the spinal cord  
 and govern mainly the trunk and limbs

**spinal puncture** /ˌspɪn(ə)l 'pʌŋktʃə/ *noun*  
 same as **lumbar puncture**

**spinal shock** /'spɪn(ə)l 'ʃɒk/ *noun* a loss of  
 feeling in the lower part of the body below a point  
 at which the spine has been injured

**spindle** /'spɪnd(ə)l/ *noun* **1.** a long thin struc-  
 ture **2.** a structure formed in cells during division  
 to which the chromosomes are attached by their  
 centromeres

**spine** /spɪn/ *noun* the series of bones, the ver-  
 tebrae, linked together to form a flexible support-  
 ing column running from the pelvis to the skull ○  
*She injured her spine in the crash.* Also called  
**backbone**, **spinal column**, **vertebral column**

**Spinhaler** /spɪn'hɛɪlə/ a trade name for a  
 device from which a person with breathing prob-  
 lems can inhale a preset dose of a drug

**spinnbarkeit** /'spɪnbɑ:kart/ *noun* a thread of  
 mucus formed in the cervix which is used in  
 determining the time of ovulation. At this time it  
 can be drawn out on a glass slide to its maximum  
 length.

**spino-** /spɪnəʊ/ *prefix* **1.** referring to the spine  
**2.** referring to the spinal cord

**spiral** /'spɪərəl/ *adjective* running in a contin-  
 uous circle upwards

**spiral bandage** /ˌspɪərəl 'bændɪdʒ/ *noun*  
 a bandage which is wrapped round a limb, each  
 turn overlapping the one before

**spiral organ** /ˌspɪərəl 'ɔ:gən/ *noun* same as  
**organ of Corti**

**spiro-** /spɪərəʊ/ *prefix* **1.** referring to a spiral **2.**  
 referring to respiration

**spiogram** /'spɪərəʊgræm/ *noun* a record of  
 someone's breathing made by a spiograph

**spiograph** /'spɪərəʊgrɑ:f/ *noun* a device  
 which records depth and rapidity of breathing

**spiography** /ˌspɪ'rɒgrəfi/ *noun* the recording  
 of a someone's breathing by use of a spiograph

**spiometer** /ˌspɪ'rɒmɪtə/ *noun* an instrument  
 which measures the amount of air a person  
 inhales or exhales

**spiometry** /ˌspɪ'rɒmɪtri/ *noun* a measure-  
 ment of the vital capacity of the lungs by use of a  
 spiometer

**spironolactone** /ˌspɪrənə'læktəʊn/ *noun*  
 a steroid which helps the body produce urine, used  
 in the treatment of oedema and hypertension

**Spitz-Holter valve** /ˌspɪts 'hɒltə vælʊv/ *noun*  
 a valve with a one-way system, surgically placed  
 in the skull and used to drain excess fluid from the  
 brain in hydrocephalus

**splanchnic** /ˈsplæŋkniːk/ *adjective* referring to viscera

**splanchnic nerve** /ˈsplæŋkniːk nɜːv/ *noun* any sympathetic nerve which supplies organs in the abdomen

**spleen** /spliːn/ *noun* an organ in the top part of the abdominal cavity behind the stomach and below the diaphragm, which helps to destroy old red blood cells, form lymphocytes and store blood. See illustration at **DIGESTIVE SYSTEM** in Supplement

**splen-** /splen/ *prefix* same as **spleno-** (used before vowels)

**splenectomy** /splɛˈnektəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to remove the spleen (NOTE: The plural is **splenectomies**.)

**splenic** /ˈsplenɪk/ *adjective* referring to the spleen

**splenic anaemia** /ˌsplenɪk əˈniːmiə/ *noun* a type of anaemia, caused by cirrhosis of the liver, in which the person has portal hypertension, an enlarged spleen and haemorrhages. Also called **Banti's syndrome**

**splenic flexure** /ˌsplenɪk ˈflekʃə/ *noun* a bend in the colon where the transverse colon joins the descending colon

**splenitis** /spləˈnaitɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the spleen

**spleno-** /spliːnəʊ/ *prefix* referring to the spleen

**splenomegaly** /ˌspliːnəʊˈmegəli/ *noun* a condition in which the spleen is unusually large, associated with several disorders including malaria and some cancers

**splenorenal** /ˌspliːnəʊˈriːn(ə)l/ *adjective* relating to both the spleen and the kidneys

**splenorenal anastomosis** /ˌspliːnəʊˈriːn(ə)l əˌnæstəˈməʊsɪs/ *noun* a surgical operation to join the splenic vein to a renal vein, as a treatment for portal hypertension

**splenovenography** /ˌspliːnəʊvəˈnɒgrəfi/ *noun* X-ray examination of the spleen and the veins which are connected to it

**splint** /splɪnt/ *noun* a stiff support attached to a limb to prevent a broken bone from moving ○ *He had to keep his arm in a splint for several weeks.*

♣ **shin splints**

**splinter haemorrhage** /ˈsplɪntəˌhem(ə)rɪdʒ/ *noun* a tiny line of haemorrhaging under the nails or in the eyeball

**split personality** /ˌsplɪt ˌpɜːsəˈnæləti/ *noun* same as **schizoid personality**

**split-skin graft** /ˌsplɪt ˌskɪn ˈgrɑːft/ *noun* a type of skin graft in which thin layers of skin are grafted over a wound. Also called **Thiersch graft**

**spondyl** /ˈspɒndɪl/ *noun* same as **vertebra**

**spondyl-** /spɒndɪl/ *prefix* same as **spondylo-** (used before vowels)

**spondylitis** /ˌspɒndɪˈlaɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the vertebrae

**spondylo-** /spɒndɪləʊ/ *prefix* referring to the vertebrae

**spondylolisthesis** /ˌspɒndɪləʊˈlɪstəstɪs/ *noun* a condition in which one of the lumbar vertebrae moves forwards over the one beneath

**spondylosis** /ˌspɒndɪˈləʊsɪs/ *noun* stiffness in the spine and degenerative changes in the intervertebral discs, with osteoarthritis. This condition is common in older people.

**spondylosyndesis** /ˌspɒndɪləʊsɪnˈdiːsɪs/ *noun* same as **spinal fusion**

**sponge bath** /ˈspʌŋʒ bɑːθ/ *noun* the act of washing someone in bed, using a sponge or damp cloth ○ *The nurse gave the elderly lady a sponge bath.*

**spongiform encephalopathy** /ˌspʌŋʒɪfɔːm enˌkefəˈlɒpəθi/ *noun* a brain disease in humans and animals in which areas of the brain slowly develop holes in their cells and begin to look like a sponge

**spontaneous** /spɒnˈteɪniəs/ *adjective* happening without any particular outside cause

**spontaneous delivery** /spɒnˌteɪniəs dɪˈlɪv(ə)rɪ/ *noun* a delivery of a baby which takes place naturally, without any medical or surgical help

**spontaneous pneumothorax** /spɒnˌteɪniəs ˌnjuːməʊˈθɔːræks/ *noun* a condition occurring when an opening is created on the surface of the lung allowing air to leak into the pleural cavity

**spontaneous version** /spɒnˌteɪniəs ˈvɜːʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a movement of a fetus to take up another position in the uterus, caused by the contractions of the uterus during childbirth or by the movements of the baby itself before birth

**sporadic** /spəˈrædɪk/ *adjective* referring to outbreaks of disease that occur as separate cases, not in epidemics

**spore** /spɔː/ *noun* a reproductive body of particular bacteria and fungi which can survive in extremely hot or cold conditions for a long time

**sporidical** /ˌspɔːrɪˈsaɪd(ə)l/ *adjective* killing spores

**sporicide** /ˈspɔːrɪsaɪd/ *noun* a substance which kills bacterial spores

**Sporozoa** /ˌspɔːrɔːˈzəʊə/ *noun* a type of parasitic Protozoa which includes Plasmodium, the cause of malaria

**sports injury** /ˈspɔːts ˌɪndʒəri/ *noun* an injury caused by playing a sport, e.g. a sprained ankle or tennis elbow

**sports medicine** /ˈspɔːts ˌmed(ə)sɪn/ *noun* the study of the treatment of sports injuries

**spotted fever** /ˌspɒtɪd ˈfiːvə/ *noun* same as **meningococcal meningitis**

**sprain** /spreɪn/ *noun* a condition in which the ligaments in a joint are stretched or torn because of a sudden movement ■ *verb* to tear the ligaments in a joint with a sudden movement ○ *She sprained her wrist when she fell.*

**Sprengel's deformity** /'spɪŋgəlz dɪ ,fɔːmɪtɪ/, **Sprengel's shoulder** /,spɪŋgəlz 'ʃəʊldə/ *noun* a congenitally malformed shoulder, in which one scapula is smaller and higher than the other [Described 1891. After Otto Gerhard Karl Sprengel (1852–1915), German surgeon.]

**sprue** /spruː/ *noun* same as **psilosis**

**spud** /spʌd/ *noun* a needle used to get a piece of dust or other foreign body out of the eye

**spur** /spɜː/ *noun* a sharp projecting part of a bone

**sputum** /'spjuːtəm/ *noun* mucus which is formed in the inflamed nose, throat or lungs and is coughed up ○ *She was coughing up blood-stained sputum.* Also called **phlegm**

**squama** /'skweɪmə/ *noun* a thin piece of hard tissue, e.g. a thin flake of bone or scale on the skin (NOTE: The plural is **squamae**.)

**squamo-** /'skweɪmə/ *prefix* **1.** relating to the squamous part of the temporal bone **2.** scaly

**squamous** /'skweɪməs/ *adjective* thin and hard like a scale

**squamous bone** /'skweɪməs bæʊn/ *noun* a part of the temporal bone which forms the side of the skull

**squamous cell carcinoma** /,skweɪməs sel ,kɑːsɪ'nəʊmə/ *noun* a common type of cancer which usually develops in the outer layer of the skin, on the lips, or inside the mouth or oesophagus. Abbreviation **SCC**

**squamous epithelium** /,skweɪməs ,epɪ 'θɪːliəm/ *noun* epithelium with flat cells like scales, which forms the lining of the pericardium, the peritoneum and the pleura. Also called **pavement epithelium**

**squint** /skwɪnt/ *noun* a condition in which the eyes focus on different points. Also called **strabismus** ■ *verb* to have one eye or both eyes looking towards the nose ○ *Babies often appear to squint, but it is corrected as they grow older.*

**SRN** *abbreviation* State Registered Nurse

**SSRI** *abbreviation* selective serotonin re-uptake inhibitor

**stabbing pain** /'stæbɪŋ peɪn/ *noun* pain which comes in a series of short sharp bursts ○ *He had stabbing pains in his chest.*

**staccato speech** /stə,kætəʊ 'spɪtɪʃ/ *noun* an unusual way of speaking with short pauses between each word

**Stacke's operation** /'stækɪz ɒpə'reɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a surgical operation to remove the posterior and superior wall of the auditory meatus [After Ludwig Stacke (1859–1918), German otologist.]

**stadium** /'steɪdɪəm/ *noun* a particular stage of a disease (NOTE: The plural is **stadia**.)

**stadium invasioni** /,steɪdɪəm ɪn'veɪʃɪ'əʊni/ *noun* same as **incubation period**

**staff nurse** /'stɑːf nɜːs/ *noun* a nurse who is on the permanent staff of a hospital

**stage** /steɪdʒ/ *noun* a point in the development of a disease at which a decision can be taken about the treatment which should be given or at which distinctive developments take place ○ *The disease has reached a critical stage.* ○ *This is a symptom of the second stage of syphilis.*

**staging** /'steɪdʒɪŋ/ *noun* the process of performing tests to learn the extent of a disease within the body, in order to decide the best treatment for someone

**stain** /steɪn/ *noun* a substance used to give colour to tissues which are going to be examined under the microscope ■ *verb* to treat a piece of tissue with a dye to increase contrast before it is examined under the microscope

**Stamey procedure** /'steɪmi prə,sɪ:dʒə/ *noun* a surgical operation to cure stress incontinence in women. A minor abdominal incision is made as well as a vaginal incision, and the neck of the bladder is stitched to the abdominal wall.

**stammer** /'stæmə/ *noun* a speech difficulty in which someone repeats parts of a word or the whole word several times or stops to try to pronounce a word ○ *He has a bad stammer.* ■ *verb* to speak with a stammer

**stammerer** /'stæməə/ *noun* a person who stammers

**stammering** /'stæməɪŋ/ *noun* difficulty in speaking, in which the person repeats parts of a word or the whole word several times or stops to try to pronounce a word. Also called **dysphemia**

**stand** /stænd/ *verb* **1.** to be in an upright position with your bodyweight resting on your feet, or to put a person in this position **2.** to get to your feet from a sitting position (NOTE: **stood**)

**standard** /'stændəd/ *adjective* usual, recommended or established ○ *It is standard practice to take the patient's temperature twice a day.* ■ *noun* **1.** something which has been agreed upon and is used to measure other things by **2.** a level of quality achieved by someone or something ○ *The standard of care in hospitals has increased over the last years.* ○ *The report criticised the standards of hygiene in the clinic.*

**standardise** /'stændədaɪz/, **standardize** *verb* to make all things of the same type follow the same standard

**Standard Precautions** /,stændəd pri 'kɔːʃ(ə)nz/ *plural noun* the most recent set of guidelines for health care workers on dealing with blood, all body fluids, secretions and excretions (except sweat), non-intact skin and mucous membranes. They are designed to reduce the risk of

transmission of microorganisms. The Standard Precautions are implemented automatically for everyone, as all patients are presumed to be potentially infectious.

**stapedectomy** /,steɪpɪ'dektəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to remove the stapes (NOTE: The plural is **stapedectomies**.)

**stapedial mobilisation** /stə,pɪ:diəl 'məʊbɪlə'zeɪʃ(ə)n/, **stapediolysis** /stə,pɪ:di 'ɒləsɪs/ *noun* a surgical operation to relieve deafness by detaching the stapes from the fenestra ovalis (NOTE: The plural of **stapediolysis** is **stapediolyse**s.)

**stapes** /'steɪpɪz/ *noun* one of the three ossicles in the middle ear, shaped like a stirrup. See illustration at **EAR** in Supplement

**staphylectomy** /,stæfɪ'lektəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to remove the uvula (NOTE: The plural is **staphylectomies**.)

**staphylococcal** /,stæfɪlə'kɒk(ə)/ *adjective* referring to Staphylococci

**Staphylococcus** /,stæfɪlə'kɒkəs/ *noun* a bacterium which grows in a bunch like a bunch of grapes, and causes boils and food poisoning (NOTE: The plural is **Staphylococci**.)

**staphyloma** /,stæfɪ'ləʊmə/ *noun* a swelling of the cornea or the white of the eye (NOTE: The plural is **staphylomas** or **staphylomata**.)

**staphylorrhaphy** /,stæfɪ'lɔ:rəfi/ *noun* same as **palatorrhaphy** (NOTE: The plural is **staphylorrhaphies**.)

**staple** /'steɪp(ə)/ *noun* a small piece of bent metal, used to attach tissues together ■ *verb* to attach tissues with staples

**stapler** /'steɪplə/ *noun* a device used in surgery to attach tissues with staples, instead of suturing

**starch** /stɑ:tʃ/ *noun* the usual form in which carbohydrates exist in food, especially in bread, rice and potatoes. It is broken down by the digestive process into forms of sugar.

**startle reflex** /'stɑ:t(ə)l rɪ:flɛks/ *noun* the usual response of a young baby to a sudden loud noise or a sudden fall through the air, by contracting the limb and neck muscles

**starvation** /stɑ:'veɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the fact of having had very little or no food

**stasis** /'steɪsɪs/ *noun* a stoppage or slowing in the flow of a liquid, such as blood in veins, or food in the intestine

**-stasis** /steɪsɪs/ *suffix* referring to stoppage in the flow of a liquid

**stat.** /stæt/ *adverb* (written on prescriptions) immediately. Full form **statim**

**State Enrolled Nurse** /,steɪt ɪn,rəʊld 'nɜ:s/ *noun* abbreviation **SEN**. Now called **second-level nurse**

**State Registered Nurse** /,steɪt ,redʒɪstəd 'nɜ:s/ *noun* abbreviation **SRN**. Now called **first-level nurse**

**-statin** /stætɪn/ *suffix* used in generic names of lipid-lowering drugs ○ *pravastatin*

**statistics** /stə'tɪstɪks/ *plural noun* official figures which show facts ○ *Population statistics show that the birth rate is slowing down.*

**status** /'steɪtəs/ *noun* a state or condition

**status asthmaticus** /,steɪtəs æs'mætɪkəs/ *noun* an attack of bronchial asthma which lasts for a long time and results in exhaustion and collapse

**status epilepticus** /,steɪtəs epɪ'leptɪkəs/ *noun* repeated and prolonged epileptic seizures without recovery of consciousness between them

**status lymphaticus** /,steɪtəs ɪm'fætɪkəs/ *noun* a condition in which the glands in the lymphatic system are enlarged

**statutory bodies** /,stætjət(ə)rɪ 'bɒdɪz/ *plural noun* organisations set up by Acts of Parliament to carry out specific functions, e.g. the Nursing and Midwifery Council, set up to regulate the nursing and midwifery professions

**STD** *abbreviation* sexually transmitted disease

**steam inhalation** /,sti:m ɪnhə'leɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a treatment for respiratory disease in which someone breathes in steam with medicinal substances in it

**steat-** /sti:təl/, **steato-** /sti:təʊl/ *prefix* referring to fat

**steatoma** /,sti:tə'təʊmə/ *noun* a cyst in a blocked sebaceous gland. † **sebaceous cyst** (NOTE: The plural is **steatomata**.)

**steatopygia** /,sti:tə'pɪdʒɪə/ *noun* excessive fat on the buttocks

**steatorrhoea** /,sti:tə'rɪə/ *noun* a condition in which fat is passed in the faeces

**Stein-Leventhal syndrome** /,steɪn 'levəntəl ,sɪndrəʊm/ *noun* † **polycystic ovary syndrome** [Described 1935. After Irving F. Stein (1887–1976), US gynaecologist; Michael Leo Leventhal (1901–71), US obstetrician and gynaecologist.]

**Steinmann's pin** /,steɪnmænz 'pɪn/ *noun* a pin for attaching traction wires to a fractured bone [Described 1907. After Fritz Steinmann (1872–1932), Swiss surgeon.]

**stellate** /'steɪlə/ *adjective* shaped like a star

**stellate fracture** /,steɪlət 'fræktʃə/ *noun* a fracture of the kneecap shaped like a star

**stellate ganglion** /,steɪlət 'gæŋɡliən/ *noun* a group of nerve cells in the neck, shaped like a star

**Stellwag's sign** /'stelvə:gz saɪn/ *noun* a symptom of exophthalmic goitre, where someone does not blink often, because the eyeball is protruding [After Carl Stellwag von Carion (1823–1904), ophthalmologist in Vienna, Austria.]

**stem** /stem/ *noun* a thin piece of tissue which attaches an organ or growth to the main tissue

**steno-** /stenəʊ/ *prefix* narrow or constricted

**stenosed valve** /ste,nəʊst 'vælv/ *noun* a valve which has become narrow or constricted

**stenosis** /ste'nəʊsɪs/ *noun* a condition in which a passage becomes narrow

**stenostomia** /,stenəʊ'stəʊmiə/, **stenostomy** /ste'nɒstəmi/ *noun* the narrowing of an opening

**Stensen's duct** /,stensənz 'dakt/ *noun* a duct which carries saliva from the parotid glands [Described 1661. After Niels Stensen (1638–86), Danish physician and priest, anatomist, physiologist and theologian.]

**stent** /stent/ *noun* a support of artificial material often inserted in a tube or vessel which has been sutured

**stereo-** /stɜ:kəʊ/ *prefix* referring to faeces

**stercobilin** /,stɜ:kə'baɪlɪn/ *noun* a brown pigment which colours the faeces

**stercolith** /'stɜ:kəlɪθ/ *noun* a hard ball of dried faeces in the bowel

**stereognosis** /,sterɪŋg'nəʊsɪs/ *noun* the ability to tell the shape of an object in three dimensions by means of touch

**stereoscopic vision** /,steriəskɒpɪk 'vɪʒ(ə)n/ *noun* the ability to judge the distance and depth of an object by binocular vision

**stereotactic** /,steriəʊ'tæktɪk/ *adjective* referring to procedures which use coordinates put into a computer or scanner in order to locate and operate upon tumours precisely. Examples are biopsies, surgery or radiation therapy.

**stereotaxy** /,steriəʊ'tæksɪ/, **stereotaxic surgery** /,steriəʊtæksɪk 'sɜ:dʒəri/ *noun* a surgical procedure to identify a point in the interior of the brain, before an operation can begin, to locate exactly the area to be operated on

**Sterets** /'sterəts/ a trademark for a type of swab used for cleaning the skin before an injection

**sterile** /'steraɪl/ *adjective* **1.** with no harmful microorganisms present ○ a *sterile environment* **2.** not able to produce children

**sterile dressing** /,steraɪl 'dresɪŋ/ *noun* a dressing which is sold in a sterile pack, ready for use

**sterilisation** /,sterɪlaɪ'zeɪʃ(ə)n/, **sterilization** *noun* **1.** the action of making instruments or areas completely free from microorganisms which might cause infection **2.** a procedure that makes someone unable to have children

**sterilise** /'sterɪlaɪz/, **sterilize** *verb* **1.** to make something completely free from microorganisms which might cause infection **2.** to make someone unable to have children

**sterilising** /'sterɪlaɪzɪŋ/ *adjective* able to kill microorganisms ○ *Wipe the surface with sterilising fluid.*

**sterility** /stə'rɪlɪti/ *noun* **1.** the state of being free from microorganisms **2.** the state of being unable to have children

**Steri-Strips** /'steri strips/ a trademark for thin paper strips which are placed over an incision in the skin. They help its edges to come together and form a scar.

**sternal** /'stɜ:n(ə)/ *adjective* referring to the breastbone

**sternal angle** /,stɜ:n(ə)l 'æŋɡ(ə)/ *noun* the ridge of bone where the manubrium articulates with the body of the sternum

**sterno-** /stɜ:nəʊ/ *prefix* relating to the breastbone

**sternocleidomastoid muscle** /,stɜ:nəʊ ,klaɪdəʊ'mæstɔɪd ,mæs(ə)/ *noun* a muscle in the neck, running from the breastbone to the mastoid process

**sternocostal joint** /,stɜ:nəʊ'kɒst(ə)l ,dʒɔɪnt/ *noun* a joint where the breastbone joins a rib

**sternohyoid** /,stɜ:nəʊ'hɔɪɔɪd/ *adjective* relating to the sternum and the hyoid bone

**sternohyoid muscle** /,stɜ:nəʊ'hɔɪɔɪd ,mæs(ə)/ *noun* a muscle in the neck which runs from the breastbone into the hyoid bone

**sternomastoid** /,stɜ:nəʊ'mæstɔɪd/ *adjective* referring to the breastbone and the mastoid

**sternomastoid tumour** /,stɜ:nəʊ,mæstɔɪd 'tʃu:mə/ *noun* a benign tumour which appears in the sternomastoid muscle in newborn babies

**sternotomy** /stɜ:'nɒtəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to cut through the breastbone, so as to be able to operate on the heart

**sternum** /'stɜ:nəm/ *noun* same as **breastbone**

**steroid** /'stɪərɔɪd/ *noun* any of several chemical compounds, including the sex hormones, which have characteristic ring systems and which affect the body and its functions

**stertor** /'stɜ:tə/ *noun* noisy breathing sounds in someone unconscious

**stertorous** /'stɜ:t(ə)rəs/ *adjective* characterised by heavy snoring

**steth-** /steθ/, **stetho-** /steθə/ *prefix* referring to the chest

**stethoscope** /'steθəskəʊp/ *noun* a surgical instrument with two earpieces connected to a tube and a metal disc, used by doctors to listen to sounds made inside the body, e.g. the sounds of the heart or lungs

**Stevens-Johnson syndrome** /,sti:vənʒ 'dʒɒnsən ,sɪndrəʊm/ *noun* a severe form of erythema multiforme affecting the face and genitals, caused by an allergic reaction to drugs [Described 1922. After Albert Mason Stevens (1884–1945); Frank Chambliss Johnson (1894–1934), physicians in New York, USA.]

**sthenia** /'sθi:niə/ *noun* a condition of great strength or vitality

**STI** *abbreviation* sexually transmitted infection

**sticking plaster** /'stɪkɪŋ ˌplɑ:stə/ *noun* an adhesive plaster or tape used to cover a small wound or to attach a pad of dressing to the skin

**stiff neck** /ˌstɪf 'nek/ *noun* a condition in which moving the neck is painful, usually caused by a strained muscle or by sitting in a cold wind

**stigma** /'stɪgmə/ *noun* a visible symptom which shows that someone has a particular disease (NOTE: The plural is **stigmas** or **stigmata**.)

**stilet** /stɑ:'let/ *noun* **1.** a fine wire used as a probe in surgery **2.** a wire inserted in a catheter to give it rigidity

**stillbirth** /'stɪlbɜ:θ/ *noun* the birth of a dead fetus, more than 28 weeks after conception (*informal*)

**Still's disease** /'stɪlz dɪˌzi:z/ *noun* arthritis affecting children, similar to rheumatoid arthritis in adults [Described 1896. After Sir George Frederic Still (1868–1941), British paediatrician and physician to the king.]

**stimulant** /'stɪmjələnt/ *noun* a substance which makes part of the body function faster ○ *Caffeine is a stimulant.* ■ *adjective* increasing body function

**stimulate** /'stɪmjələɪt/ *verb* to make a person or organ react, respond or function ○ *The therapy should stimulate the patient into attempting to walk unaided.* ○ *The drug stimulates the heart.*

**stimulus** /'stɪmjələs/ *noun* something which has an effect on a person or a part of the body and makes them react (NOTE: The plural is **stimuli**.)

**stinging** /'stɪŋɪŋ/ *adjective* referring to a sharp unpleasant feeling of pricking or burning ○ *a sudden stinging sensation in the back of her leg*

**stirrup** /'stɪrəp/ *noun* same as **stapes**

**stitch** /stɪtʃ/ *noun* **1.** same as **suture noun 2** ○ *He had three stitches in his head.* ○ *The doctor told her to come back in ten days' time to have the stitches taken out.* **2.** pain caused by cramp in the side of the body after running ○ *He had to stop running because he developed a stitch.* ■ *verb* same as **suture** ○ *They tried to stitch back the finger which had been cut off in an accident.*

**stitch abscess** /'stɪtʃ ˌæbses/ *noun* an abscess which forms at the site of a stitch or suture

**Stokes-Adams syndrome** /ˌstəʊks 'ædəmz ˌsɪndrəm/ *noun* a loss of consciousness due to the stopping of the action of the heart because of asystole or fibrillation [After William Stokes (1804–78), Irish physician; Robert Adams (1791–1875), Irish surgeon.]

**stoma** /'stəʊmə/ *noun* any opening into a cavity in the body (NOTE: The plural is **stomata**.)

**stomach** /'stʌmək/ *noun* **1.** the part of the body shaped like a bag, into which food passes after

being swallowed and where the process of digestion continues ○ *She complained of pains in the stomach or of stomach pains.* ○ *He has had stomach trouble for some time.* See illustration at **DIGESTIVE SYSTEM** in Supplement **2.** the abdomen (*informal*) ○ *He had been kicked in the stomach.* (NOTE: For other terms referring to the stomach, see words beginning with **gastr-**, **gastro-**.)

**stomach ache** /'stʌmək eɪk/ *noun* pain in the abdomen or stomach, caused by eating too much food or by an infection

**stomach cramp** /'stʌmək kræmp/ *noun* a sharp spasm of the stomach muscles

**stomach hernia** /'stʌmək ˌhɜ:niə/ *noun* same as **gastrocele**

**stomach pump** /'stʌmək pʌmp/ *noun* an instrument for sucking out the contents of the stomach, e.g. to extract a poison that has been swallowed

**stomach upset** /'stʌmək ˌʌpset/ *noun* a slight infection of the stomach ○ *She is in bed with a stomach upset.* Also called **upset stomach**

**stomach washout** /ˌstʌmək ˌwɒʃaʊt/ *noun* same as **gastric lavage**

**stomal** /'stəʊm(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to a stoma

**stomat-** /stəʊmət/ *prefix* same as **stomato-** (*used before vowels*)

**stomatitis** /ˌstəʊmə'taɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the inside of the mouth

**stomato-** /stəʊmətə/ *prefix* referring to the mouth

**stomatology** /ˌstəʊmə'tɒlədʒi/ *noun* a branch of medicine which studies diseases of the mouth

**-stomy** /stəmi/ *suffix* meaning an operation to make an opening

**stone** /stəʊn/ *noun* **1.** same as **calculus (informal)** (NOTE: For other terms referring to stones, see words beginning with **lith-**, **litho-**, or ending with **-lith**.) **2.** a measure of weight equal to 14 pounds or 6.35 kilograms ○ *He tried to lose weight and lost three stone.* ○ *She weighs eight stone ten (i.e. 8 stone 10 pounds).*

**stool** /stu:l/ *noun* **1.** an act of emptying the bowels **2.** a piece of solid waste matter which is passed out of the bowels ○ *an abnormal stool* ○ *loose stools* ○ *a stool test* (NOTE: Often used in the plural.) ■ *verb* to pass a piece of solid matter out of the bowels

**strabismic** /strə'bɪzɪm(ə)l/ *adjective* with the eyes focusing on different points

**strabismus** /strə'bɪzɪməs/ *noun* a condition in which the eyes focus on different points. Also called **squint**, **heterotropia**

**strabotomy** /strə'bɒtəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to divide the muscles of the eye in order to correct a squint

**strain** /streɪn/ *noun* **1.** a condition in which a muscle has been stretched or torn by a strong or sudden movement **2.** a group of microorganisms which are different from others of the same type ○ *a new strain of influenza virus* **3.** nervous tension and stress ○ *Her work is causing her a lot of strain.* ○ *He is suffering from nervous strain and needs to relax.* ■ *verb* to stretch a muscle too far ○ *He strained his back lifting the table.* ○ *She had to leave the game with a strained calf muscle.* ○ *The effort of running upstairs strained his heart.*

**strangulated** /'stræŋgjʊleɪtɪd/ *adjective* referring to part of the body which is caught in an opening in such a way that the circulation of blood is stopped

**strangulated hernia** /,stræŋgjʊleɪtɪd 'hɜːniə/ *noun* a condition in which part of the intestine is squeezed in a hernia and the supply of blood to it is cut off

**strangulation** /,stræŋgju'leɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the act of squeezing a passage in the body

**strangury** /'stræŋgjʊri/ *noun* a condition in which very little urine is passed, although the person wants to urinate, caused by a bladder disorder or by a stone in the urethra

**Strategic Health Authority** /strə'tiːdʒɪk 'helθ ɔːθɔːrtɪ/ *noun* in the UK, an organisation, accountable to government, that assesses the health needs of local people and ensures that local health services are commissioned and provided to meet those needs. Abbreviation **SHA**

**stratified** /'strætɪfaɪd/ *adjective* made of several layers

**stratified epithelium** /,strætɪfaɪd epi 'θiːliəm/ *noun* epithelium formed of several layers of cells

**strawberry mark** /'strɔːb(ə)ri mɑːk/ *noun* a red birthmark in children, which will often disappear in later life

**streak** /striːk/ *noun* a long thin line of a different colour

**strepto-** /streptə/ *prefix* referring to organisms which grow in chains

**streptococcal** /,streptə'kɒk(ə)l/ *adjective* caused by a streptococcus

**streptococcus** /,streptə'kɒkəs/ *noun* a genus of bacteria which grows in long chains, and causes fevers such as scarlet fever, tonsillitis and rheumatic fever (NOTE: The plural is **streptococci**.)

**streptokinase** /,streptə'kaɪneɪz/ *noun* an enzyme formed by streptococci which can break down blood clots and is therefore used in the treatment of myocardial infarction

**streptolysin** /strep'tɒləsɪn/ *noun* a toxin produced by streptococci in rheumatic fever, which acts to destroy red blood cells

**stress** /stres/ *noun* **1.** physical pressure on an object or part of the body **2.** a factor or combination of factors in a person's life which make him or her feel tired and anxious **3.** a condition in which an outside influence such as overwork or a mental or emotional state such as anxiety changes the working of the body and can affect the hormone balance

**stress disorder** /'stres dɪs,ɔːdɪ/ *noun* a disorder caused by stress

**stress fracture** /'stres ,fræktʃə/ *noun* a fracture of a bone caused by excessive force, as in some types of sport. Also called **fatigue fracture**

**stress incontinence** /'stres ɪn,kɒntɪnəns/ *noun* a condition in women in which the muscles in the floor of the pelvis become incapable of retaining urine when the intra-abdominal pressure is raised by coughing or laughing

**stress reaction** /'stres rɪ,æktʃən/ *noun* a response to an outside stimulus which disturbs the usual physiological balance of the body

**stress-related illness** /,stres rɪ,leɪtɪd 'ɪlnəs/ *noun* an illness which is due in part or completely to stress

**stretch** /stretʃ/ *verb* to pull something out, or make something longer

**stretch mark** /'stretʃ mɑːk/ *noun* a mark on the skin of the abdomen of a pregnant woman or of a woman who has recently given birth. ⇨ **striae gravidarum**

**stretch reflex** /'stretʃ ,rɪ:flɛks/ *noun* a reflex reaction of a muscle which contracts after being stretched

**stria** /'straɪə/ *noun* a pale line on skin which is stretched, as in obese people (NOTE: The plural is **striae**.)

**striae gravidarum** /,straɪi ,grævɪ'deərəm/ *plural noun* the lines on the skin of the abdomen of a pregnant woman or of a woman who has recently given birth

**striated** /straɪ'eɪtɪd/ *adjective* marked with pale lines

**striated muscle** /straɪ'eɪtɪd ,mʌs(ə)l/ *noun* a type of muscle found in skeletal muscles whose movements are controlled by the central nervous system. Also called **striped muscle**

**stricture** /'strɪktʃəl/ *noun* the narrowing of a passage in the body

**stricturoplasty** /'strɪktʃəʊ,plæsti/ *noun* a surgical operation in which a part of the intestine is widened

**stridor** /'straɪdɔː/, **stridulus** /'straɪdjʊləs/ *noun* a sharp high sound made when air passes an obstruction in the larynx. ⇨ **laryngismus**

**striped muscle** /'straɪpt ,mʌs(ə)l/ *noun* same as **striated muscle**

**stroke** /strəʊk/ *noun* same as **cerebrovascular accident** ○ *He had a stroke and died.* ○ *She was*



*paralysed after a stroke.* ■ *verb* to touch something or someone softly with the fingers

**stroke patient** /'strəʊk ,peɪf(ə)nt/ *noun* a person who has had a stroke

**stroke volume** /'strəʊk ,vɒljʊ:m/ *noun* the amount of blood pumped out of the ventricle at each heartbeat

**stroma** /'strɔ:mə/ *noun* tissue which supports an organ, as opposed to the parenchyma or functioning tissues in the organ

**strontium** /'strɒntiəm/ *noun* a metallic element (NOTE: The chemical symbol is **Sr**.)

**strontium-90** /,strɒntiəm 'naɪnti/ *noun* an isotope of strontium which is formed in nuclear reactions and, because it is part of the fallout of nuclear explosions, can enter the food chain, attacking in particular the bones of humans and animals

**strychnine** /'stri:kni:n/ *noun* a poisonous alkaloid drug, made from the seeds of a tropical tree, and formerly used in small doses as a tonic

**Stryker frame** /'straɪkə freɪm/ *noun* a special piece of equipment on which a patient can easily be rotated by a nurse, used for patients with spinal injuries

**ST segment** /,es 'ti: ,seɡmənt/, **S-T segment** *noun* the part of an electrocardiogram, between the points labelled S and T, immediately before the last phase of the cardiac cycle. ◊ **PQRST complex**

**study** /'stʌdi/ *noun* the act of examining something to learn about it ◊ *She's making a study of diseases of small children.* ◊ *They have finished their study of the effects of the drug on pregnant women.* ■ *verb* to examine something to learn about it ◊ *He's studying pharmacy.* ◊ *Doctors are studying the results of the screening programme.*

**stupe** /stju:p/ *noun* a wet medicated dressing used as a compress

**stupor** /'stju:pə/ *noun* a state of being semi-conscious ◊ *After the party several people were found lying on the floor in a stupor.*

**Sturge-Weber syndrome** /,stɜ:dʒ 'webə ,sɪndrəʊm/ *noun* a dark red mark on the skin above the eye, together with similar marks inside the brain, possibly causing epileptic fits

**stuttering** /'stʌtərɪŋ/ *noun* same as **stammering**

**style** /stai/ *noun* same as **hordeolum**

**stylet** /'stailət/ *noun* 1. a very thin piece of wire which is put into a catheter or hollow needle so that it will not become blocked when it is not being used 2. any long thin pointed instrument

**stylo-** /stailəʊ/ *prefix* referring to the styloid process

**styloid** /'stailəɪd/ *adjective* pointed

**styloid process** /'stailəɪd ,prəʊses/ *noun* a piece of bone which projects from the bottom of the temporal bone

**stylus** /'stailəs/ *noun* a long thin instrument used for applying antiseptics or ointments to the skin

**styptic** /'stɪptɪk/ *noun* a substance which stops bleeding ■ *adjective* used to stop bleeding

**styptic pencil** /,stɪptɪk 'pens(ə)l/ *noun* a stick of alum, used to stop bleeding from small cuts

**sub-** /sʌb/ *prefix* underneath or below

**subacute** /,sʌbə'kju:t/ *adjective* referring to a condition which is not acute but may become chronic

**subacute bacterial endocarditis** /,sʌbə'kju:t bæktəriəl ,endəʊkɑ:'daitɪs/, **subacute infective endocarditis** /,sʌbə'kju:t ɪn'fektɪv ,endəʊkɑ:'daitɪs/ *noun* an infection of the membrane covering the inner surfaces of the heart caused by bacteria

**subacute combined degeneration of the spinal cord** /,sʌbə'kju:t kəm,bəɪnd dɪ ,dʒenərəɪf(ə)n əv ðə 'spain(ə)l kɔ:d/ *noun* a condition, caused by Vitamin B<sub>12</sub> deficiency, in which the sensory and motor nerves in the spinal cord become damaged and the person has difficulty in moving

**subacute sclerosing panencephalitis** /,sʌbə'kju:t sklə,rəʊsɪŋ ,pænənkefə'laitɪs/ *noun* a rare inflammatory disease of the brain, mostly affecting children. It is linked to having measles at a very young age, and is usually fatal.

**subarachnoid** /,sʌbə'ræknoɪd/ *adjective* beneath the arachnoid membrane

**subarachnoid haemorrhage** /,sʌbə ,ræknoɪd 'hem(ə)rɪdʒ/ *noun* bleeding into the cerebrospinal fluid of the subarachnoid space

**subarachnoid space** /,sʌbə,ræknoɪd 'speɪs/ *noun* a space between the arachnoid membrane and the pia mater in the brain, containing cerebrospinal fluid

**subclavian** /sʌb'kleɪvɪən/ *adjective* underneath the clavicle

**subclavian artery** /sʌb'kleɪvɪən 'ɑ:təri/ *noun* one of two arteries branching from the aorta on the left and from the innominate artery on the right, continuing into the brachial arteries and supplying blood to each arm

**subclavian vein** /sʌb'kleɪvɪən 'veɪn/ *noun* one of the veins which continue the axillary veins into the brachiocephalic vein

**subclinal** /sʌb'klnɪk(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to a disease which is present in the body, but which has not yet developed any symptoms

**subconscious** /sʌb'kɒnʃəs/ *noun* the part of a person's mental processes which he or she is not aware of most of the time, but which can affect his or her actions ■ *adjective* present in the mind although a person is not aware of it

**subcostal plane** /sʌb,kɒst(ə)l 'pleɪn/ *noun* an imaginary horizontal line drawn across the front of the abdomen below the ribs

**subcutaneous** /sʌbkju:'teɪniəs/ *adjective* under the skin. Abbreviation **s.c.**

**subcutaneous injection** /sʌbkju:'teɪniəs ɪn'dʒɛkʃən/ *noun* same as **hypodermic injection**

**subcutaneous oedema** /sʌbkju:'teɪniəs ɪ'di:mə/ *noun* a fluid collecting under the skin, usually at the ankles

**subcutaneous tissue** /sʌbkju:'teɪniəs 'tɪʃu:/ *noun* fatty tissue under the skin

**subdural** /sʌb'dʒʊərəl/ *adjective* between the dura mater and the arachnoid

**subdural haematoma** /sʌb,dʒʊərəl ,hi:mə'təʊmə/ *noun* a haematoma between the dura mater and the arachnoid which displaces the brain, caused by a blow on the head

**subglottis** /sʌb'glɒtɪs/ *noun* the lowest part of the laryngeal cavity, below the vocal folds

**subinvolution** /sʌbɪn'və'lu:ʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a condition in which a part of the body does not go back to its former size and shape after having swollen or stretched, as in the case of the uterus after childbirth

**subjective** /səb'dʒɛktɪv/ *adjective* representing the views or feelings of the person concerned and not impartial ○ *The psychiatrist gave a subjective opinion on the patient's problem.* Compare **objective**

**sublimate** /'sʌblɪmeɪt/ *noun* a deposit left when a vapour condenses ■ *verb* to convert violent emotion into action which is not antisocial

**sublimation** /sʌblɪ'meɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a psychological process in which violent emotions which would otherwise be expressed in antisocial behaviour are directed into actions which are socially acceptable

**subliminal** /sʌb'limɪn(ə)l/ *adjective* too slight to be noticed by the senses

**sublingual** /sʌb'ɪŋgwəl/ *adjective* under the tongue

**sublingual gland** /sʌb'ɪŋgwəl glænd/ *noun* a salivary gland under the tongue

**subluxation** /sʌblʌk'seɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a condition in which a joint is partially dislocated

**submandibular gland** /sʌbmæn'dɪbjʊlə ,glænd/, **submaxillary gland** /sʌb'mæksɪləri ,glænd/ *noun* a salivary gland on each side of the lower jaw

**submental** /sʌb'ment(ə)l/ *adjective* under the chin

**submucosa** /sʌbmju:'kəʊsə/ *noun* tissue under a mucous membrane

**submucous** /sʌb'mju:kəs/ *adjective* under a mucous membrane

**submucous resection** /sʌb,mju:kəs ɪrɪ'sɛkʃən/ *noun* the removal of a bent cartilage from the septum in the nose. Abbreviation **SMR**

**subnormal** /sʌb'nɔ:m(ə)l/ *adjective* with a mind which has not developed fully (NOTE: This term is regarded as offensive.)

**subphrenic** /sʌb'frenɪk/ *adjective* under the diaphragm

**subphrenic abscess** /sʌb,frenɪk 'æbsɛs/ *noun* an abscess which forms between the diaphragm and the liver

**substance** /'sʌbstəns/ *noun* a chemical material, e.g. a drug ○ *toxic substances released into the bloodstream* ○ *He became addicted to certain substances.*

**substance abuse** /'sʌbstəns ə,bju:s/, **substance misuse** /'sʌbstəns mɪs,ju:z/ *noun* the misuse or excessive use of drugs, alcohol or other substances for pleasure or to satisfy addiction, which often causes health, emotional or social problems for the user

**substitution** /sʌbstɪ'tju:ʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the act of replacing one thing with another

**substitution therapy** /sʌbstɪ'tju:ʃ(ə)n ,θerəpi/ *noun* a way of treating a condition by using a different drug from the one used before

**substrate** /'sʌbstreɪt/ *noun* a substance which is acted on by an enzyme

**subsultus** /sʌb'sʌltəs/ *noun* a twitching of the muscles and tendons, caused by fever

**subtertian fever** /sʌb,tɜ:ʃ(ə)n 'fi:vəl/ *noun* a type of malaria, where the fever is present most of the time

**subtotal gastrectomy** /sʌbtəʊt(ə)l gæ'strektəmi/ *noun* the surgical removal of all but the top part of the stomach in contact with the diaphragm

**subtotal hysterectomy** /sʌbtəʊt(ə)l ,hɪstə'rektəmi/ *noun* the surgical removal of the uterus, but not the cervix

**subtotal pancreatectomy** /sʌbtəʊt(ə)l ,pæŋkriə'tektəmi/ *noun* the surgical removal of most of the pancreas

**subungual** /sʌb'ʌŋgwəl/ *adjective* under a nail

**succus** /'sʌkəs/ *noun* juice secreted by an organ

**succus entericus** /sʌkəs ɛn'terɪkəs/ *noun* juice formed of enzymes, produced in the intestine to help the digestive process

**succussion** /sə'kʌʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a splashing sound made when there is a large amount of liquid inside a cavity in the body, e.g. the stomach

**sucrose** /'su:krəʊs/ *noun* a sugar, formed of glucose and fructose, found in plants, especially in sugar cane, beet and maple syrup

**suction** /'sʌkʃən/ *noun* a force created by the action of sucking ○ *The dentist hooked a suction tube into the patient's mouth.*

**sudden** /'sʌd(ə)n/ *adjective* happening quickly

**sudden death** /ˌsʌd(ə)n 'deθ/ *noun* death without any identifiable cause, not preceded by an illness

**sudden infant death syndrome** /ˌsʌd(ə)n ˌɪnfənt 'deθ ˌsɪndrəʊm/ *noun* the sudden death of a baby under the age of about twelve months in bed, without any identifiable cause. Abbreviation **SIDS**. Also called **cot death**

**sudor** /'su:ɪdɔ:z/ *noun* sweat

**sudorific** /ˌsu:də'rɪfɪk/ *noun* a drug which makes someone sweat

**suffer** /'sʌfə/ *verb* **1.** to have an illness for a long period of time ○ *I suffer from headaches.* **2.** to feel pain ○ *I didn't suffer much.* **3.** to receive an injury ○ *He suffered multiple injuries in the accident.*

**suffering** /'sʌf(ə)rɪŋ/ *noun* the experiencing of pain over a long period of time

**suffocation** /ˌsʌfə'keɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the act of making someone become unconscious by cutting off his or her supply of air

**suffusion** /sə'fju:z(ə)n/ *noun* the spreading of a red flush over the skin

**sugar** /'fju:ɡəl/ *noun* any of several sweet carbohydrates (NOTE: For other terms referring to sugar, see words beginning with **glyc-**, **glyco-**)

**sugar intolerance** /'fju:ɡər ɪnˌtɒlərəns/ *noun* diarrhoea caused by sugar which has not been absorbed

**suggestibility** /səˌdʒestɪ'bɪlɪti/ *noun* a mental state in which somebody just accepts other people's ideas, attitudes or instructions, without questioning them. It is usually increased under hypnosis.

**suggestible** /səˌdʒestɪb(ə)l/ *adjective* easily influenced by other people

**suggestion** /səˌdʒestʃən/ *noun* **1.** an idea which has been mentioned ○ *The doctor didn't agree with the suggestion that the disease had been caught in the hospital.* **2.** (in psychiatry) the process of making a person's ideas change, by suggesting different ideas which the person can accept, such as that he or she is in fact cured

**suicide** /'su:ɪsaɪd/ *noun* the act of killing oneself

**sulcus** /'sʌlkəs/ *noun* a groove or fold, especially the gyri in the brain

**sulfa drug** /'sʌlfə drʌɡ/, **sulfa compound** /'sʌlfə kəmˌpaʊnd/ *noun* same as **sulfonamide**

**sulfasalazine** /ˌsʌlfə'sæləzi:n/ *noun* a drug belonging to the sulfonamide group of antibacterial drugs. It is used in the treatment of ulcerative colitis and Crohn's disease, and also of severe rheumatoid arthritis.

**sulfonamide** /sʌ'fɒnəmaɪd/ *noun* a bacteriostatic drug, e.g. trimethoprim, used to treat bacterial infection, especially in the intestine and urinary system, but now less important due to increasing bacterial resistance

**sulfonylurea** /ˌsʌlfənəɪljʊ'ri:ə/ *noun* any of a group of drugs which lower blood sugar, used in the treatment of diabetes

**sulfur** /'sʌlfə/ *noun* another spelling of **sulphur**

**sulphur** /'sʌlfə/ *noun* a yellow non-metallic chemical element which is contained in some amino acids and is used in creams to treat some skin disorders (NOTE: The chemical symbol is **S**.)

**sulphuric acid** /sʌlˌfjʊərɪk 'æsɪd/ *noun* a strong colourless oily corrosive acid which has many uses

**sumatriptan** /ˌsu:mə'trɪptæn/ *noun* a drug which helps to narrow the blood vessels, used in the treatment of acute migraine

**sun blindness** /'sʌn ˌblaɪndnəs/ *noun* same as **photoretinitis**

**sunburn** /'sʌnbɜ:n/ *noun* damage to the skin by excessive exposure to sunlight

**sunstroke** /'sʌnstrəʊk/ *noun* a serious condition caused by excessive exposure to the sun or to hot conditions, in which the person becomes dizzy and has a high body temperature but does not perspire

**super-** /su:pəl/ *prefix* **1.** above **2.** extremely

**superciliary** /ˌsu:pə'sɪliəri/ *adjective* referring to the eyebrows

**superego** /ˌsu:pə'rɪ:ɡəʊ/ *noun* (in psychology) the part of the mind which is a person's conscience, which is concerned with right and wrong

**superfecundation** /ˌsu:pəfɪ:kən'deɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a condition in which two or more ova produced at the same time are fertilised by different males

**superfetation** /ˌsu:pəfɪ:'teɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a condition in which an ovum is fertilised in a woman who is already pregnant

**superficial** /ˌsu:pə'fɪʃ(ə)l/ *adjective* on the surface, close to the surface or on the skin

**superficial thickness burn** /ˌsu:pə'fɪʃ(ə)l 'θɪkɪnəs ˌbɜ:n/ *noun* same as **partial thickness burn**

**superinfection** /'su:pərɪnˌfekʃən/ *noun* a second infection which affects the treatment of the first infection, because it is resistant to the drug used to treat the first

**superior** /su:pɪəriə/ *adjective* (of part of the body) higher up than another part

**superior aspect** /su:pɪəriə 'æspekt/ *noun* a view of the body from above

**superiority complex** /su:pɪəri'ɒrɪti ˌkɒmpleks/ *noun* a condition in which a person feels he or she is better and more important than others and pays little attention to them

**superior mesenteric artery** /su:pɪəriə mes(ə)nˌterɪk 'ɑ:təri/ *noun* one of the arteries which supply the small intestine

**superior vena cava** /su:pɪəriə ˌvi:nə 'keɪvə/ *noun* a branch of the large vein into the heart, car-

rying blood from the head and the top part of the body. See illustration at **HEART** in Supplement

**supernumerary** /ˌsuːpəˈnju:mərəri/ *adjective* extra, more than the usual number

**superovulation** /ˌsuːpəˈɒvjuˈleɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* an increased frequency of ovulation, or production of a large number of ova at one time. It is often caused by giving a woman with infertility problems gonadotrophin hormones to stimulate ovulation.

**supination** /ˌsuːpɪˈneɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the act of turning the hand so that the palm faces upwards. Opposite **pronation**. See illustration at **ANATOMICAL TERMS** in Supplement

**supinator** /ˈsuːpɪneɪtə/ *noun* a muscle which turns the hand so that the palm faces upwards

**supine** /ˈsuːpaɪn/ *adjective* lying on the back. Opposite **prone**

**supplement** /ˈsʌplɪmənt/ *noun* **1.** any extra nutrients that are taken to help a specific condition when someone is not getting all they need from their food ○ *vitamin and folic acid supplements* **2.** a pill or product regarded as helpful in improving health that can be bought without a prescription. Supplements are not tested in the same way as prescription drugs. ○ *dietary or food supplements* ■ *verb* to add on or increase above what is taken usually ○ *She supplemented her diet with folic acid when she was planning a pregnancy.*

**supplementary prescriber** /ˌsʌplɪˈment(ə)rɪ prɪˌskraɪbə/ *noun* a healthcare professional who, in agreement with a patient's doctor, implements an agreed course of treatment

**support hose** /səˈpɔ:t hæʊz/ *plural noun* stockings that fit tightly to the legs, worn to help the flow of blood

**supportive** /səˈpɔ:tɪv/ *adjective* helping or comforting someone in trouble ○ *Her family was very supportive when she was in hospital.* ○ *The local health authority has been very supportive of the hospital management.*

**support worker** /səˈpɔ:t ˈwɜ:kə/ *noun* someone who assists registered health service professionals as part of a team, e.g. as a nursing auxiliary or assistant, or in specialist areas such as mental health, speech therapy or physiotherapy

**suppository** /səˈpɒzɪt(ə)rɪ/ *noun* a piece of a soluble material such as glycerine jelly containing a drug, which is placed in the rectum to act as lubricant, or in the vagina, to treat disorders such as vaginitis, and is dissolved by the body's fluids

**suppress** /səˈpres/ *verb* to reduce the action of something completely, e.g. to remove a symptom or to stop the release of a hormone ○ *a course of treatment which suppresses the painful irritation* ○ *The drug suppresses the body's natural instinct to reject the transplanted tissue.* ○ *The release of adrenaline from the adrenal cortex is suppressed.*

**suppression** /səˈpres(ə)n/ *noun* the act of suppressing something ○ *the suppression of allergic responses* ○ *the suppression of a hormone*

**suppressor T-cell** /səˈpresəˈtiːˌsel/ *noun* a T-cell which stops or reduces the immune response to an antigen of B-cells and other T-cells

**suppuration** /ˌsʌpjʊˈreɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the formation and discharge of pus

**supra-** /suːprə/ *prefix* above or over

**supraglottis** /ˌsuːprəˈglɒtɪs/ *noun* the part of the larynx above the vocal folds, including the epiglottis

**supraorbital** /ˌsuːprəˈɔ:bɪt(ə)l/ *adjective* above the orbit of the eye

**supraorbital ridge** /ˌsuːprəˈɔ:bɪt(ə)l ˈrɪdʒ/ *noun* the ridge of bone above the eye, covered by the eyebrow

**suprapubic** /ˌsuːprəˈpjʊ:bɪk/ *adjective* above the pubic bone or pubic area

**suprarenal** /ˌsuːprəˈri:n(ə)l/ *adjective* above the kidneys ■ *noun* same as **suprarenal gland**

**suprarenal gland** /ˌsuːprəˈri:n(ə)l glænd/

**suprarenal** /ˌsuːprəˈri:n(ə)l/ *noun* one of two endocrine glands at the top of the kidneys, which secrete adrenaline and other hormones

**suprarenal medulla** /ˌsuːprəˈri:n(ə)l meˈdʌlə/ *noun* same as **adrenal medulla**

**suprasternal** /ˌsuːprəˈstɜ:n(ə)l/ *adjective* above the sternum

**supraventricular tachycardia** /ˌsʌbvenˈtrɪkjʊləˌtækiˈkɑ:diə/ *noun* tachycardia coming from the upper chambers of the heart

**surfactant** /sɜːˈfæktənt/ *noun* a substance in the alveoli of the lungs which keeps the surfaces of the lungs wet and prevents lung collapse

**surgeon** /ˈsɜ:dʒən/ *noun* a doctor who specialises in surgery (NOTE: Although surgeons are doctors, in the UK they are traditionally called 'Mr' and not 'Dr', so 'Dr Smith' may be a GP, but 'Mr Smith' is a surgeon.)

**surgeon general** /ˌsɜ:dʒən ˈdʒen(ə)rəl/ *noun* US a government official responsible for all aspects of public health

**surgery** /ˈsɜ:dʒəri/ *noun* **1.** the treatment of diseases or disorders by procedures which require an operation to cut into, to remove or to manipulate tissue, organs or parts ○ *The patient will need plastic surgery to remove the scars he received in the accident.* ○ *The surgical ward is for patients waiting for surgery.* ○ *Two of our patients had to have surgery.* ○ *She will have to undergo surgery.* **2.** a room where a doctor or dentist sees and examines patients ○ *There are ten patients waiting in the surgery.* ○ *Surgery hours are from 8.30 in the morning to 6.00 at night.*

**surgical** /ˈsɜ:dʒɪk(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to surgery ○ *All surgical instruments must be sterilised.*

**surgical diathermy** /,sɜ:dʒɪk(ə)l ˌdaɪə'θɜ:mi/ *noun* a procedure which uses a knife or electrode which is heated by a strong electric current until it coagulates tissue

**surgical fixation** /,sɜ:dʒɪk(ə)l fɪk'seɪfj(ə)n/ *noun* a method of immobilising something such as a bone either externally by the use of a splint or internally by a metal plate and screws

**surgical gloves** /'sɜ:dʒɪk(ə)l glʌvz/ *plural noun* thin plastic gloves worn by surgeons

**surgical intervention** /,sɜ:dʒɪk(ə)l ˌɪntə'veɪʃən/ *noun* the treatment of disease or other condition by surgery

**surgical neck** /,sɜ:dʒɪk(ə)l 'nek/ *noun* the narrow part at the top of the humerus, where the arm can easily be broken

**surgical ward** /'sɜ:dʒɪk(ə)l wɔ:d/ *noun* a ward for patients who have undergone surgery

**surgical wound** /'sɜ:dʒɪk(ə)l wu:nd/ *noun* an incision made during a surgical operation

**surrogate** /'sʌrəgət/ *adjective* taking the place of ■ *noun* someone or something that takes the place of another person or thing

**surrogate mother** a woman who has a child by artificial insemination for a woman who cannot become pregnant, with the intention of handing the child over to her when it is born

**susceptibility** /sə'septɪ'bɪlɪtɪ/ *noun* lack of resistance to a disease

**suspension** /sə'spensjən/ *noun* a liquid with solid particles in it

**suspensory** /sə'spensəri/ *adjective* hanging down

**suspensory bandage** /sə'spensəri 'bændɪdʒ/ *noun* a bandage to hold a part of the body which hangs

**suspensory ligament** /sə'spensəri ˈlɪgəmənt/ *noun* a ligament which holds a part of the body in position. See illustration at **EYE** in Supplement

**sustentacular** /,sʌstən'tækjʊlə/ *adjective* referring to a sustentaculum

**sustentaculum** /,sʌstən'tækjʊləm/ *noun* a part of the body which supports another part

**suture** /'su:tʃə/ *noun* **1.** a fixed joint where two bones are fused together, especially the bones in the skull **2.** a procedure for attaching the sides of an incision or wound with thread, so that healing can take place. Also called **stitch** **3.** a thread used for attaching the sides of a wound so that they can heal ■ *verb* to attach the sides of a wound or incision together with thread so that healing can take place. Also called **stitch**

**suxamethonium** /,sʌksəmi'thəʊniəm/ *noun* a drug similar to acetylcholine in structure, used as a muscle relaxant during surgery

**swab** /swɒb/ *noun* **1.** a cotton wool pad, often attached to a small stick, used, e.g., to clean a

wound, to apply ointment or to take a specimen **2.** a specimen taken with a swab ○ a *cervical swab*

**swallowing** /'swɒləʊɪŋ/ *noun* same as **deglutition**

**Swan-Ganz catheter** /,swɒn 'gæntz kætʰɪtəl/ *noun* a special catheter which can be floated through the right chamber of the heart into the pulmonary artery. The balloon at its tip is then inflated to measure arterial pressure.

**sweat** /swet/ *noun* a salty liquid produced by the sweat glands to cool the body as the liquid evaporates from the skin ○ *Sweat was running off the end of his nose.* ○ *Her hands were covered with sweat.* Also called **perspiration** ■ *verb* to produce moisture through the sweat glands and onto the skin ○ *After working in the fields she was sweating.*

**sweat duct** /'swet dʌkt/ *noun* a thin tube connecting the sweat gland with the surface of the skin

**sweat gland** /'swet glænd/ *noun* a gland which produces sweat, situated beneath the dermis and connected to the skin surface by a sweat duct

**sweat pore** /'swet pɔ:z/ *noun* a hole in the skin through which the sweat comes out

**swell** /swel/ *verb* to become larger, or cause something to become larger ○ *The disease affects the lymph glands, making them swell.* ○ *The doctor noticed that the patient had swollen glands in his neck.* ○ *She finds her swollen ankles painful.* (NOTE: **swelling** – **swelled** – **swollen**)

**swelling** /'swelɪŋ/ *noun* a condition in which fluid accumulates in tissue, making the tissue become large ○ *They applied a cold compress to try to reduce the swelling.*

**sycolis** /saɪ'kəʊsɪs/ *noun* a bacterial infection of hair follicles

**sycolis barbae** /saɪ,kəʊsɪs 'bɑ:bi/ *noun* an infection of hair follicles on the sides of the face and chin. Also called **barber's itch**, **barber's rash**

**Sydenham's chorea** /,sɪdnəmz kɔ'ri:ə/ *noun* temporary chorea affecting children, frequently associated with endocarditis and rheumatism [Described 1686. After Thomas Sydenham (1624–89), English physician.]

**symbiosis** /,sɪmbaɪ'əʊsɪs/ *noun* a condition in which two organisms exist together and help each other to survive

**symblepharon** /sɪm'blefərɒn/ *noun* a condition in which the eyelid sticks to the eyeball

**symbol** /'sɪmbəl/ *noun* a sign or letter which means something

**Syme's amputation** /,saɪmz æmpjʊ'teɪfj(ə)n/ *noun* a surgical operation to amputate the foot above the ankle [Described 1842. After James Syme (1799–1870), Edinburgh surgeon and teacher; one of the first to adopt antiseptics]

(Joseph Lister was his son-in-law), and also among the early users of anaesthesia.]

**symmetry** /'sɪmətri/ *noun* the regularity of structure and distribution of parts of the body, each side of the body being structurally similar to the other

**sympathectomy** /,sɪmpə'tektəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to cut part of the sympathetic nervous system, as a treatment of high blood pressure

**sympathetic** /,sɪmpə'tetɪk/ *adjective* **1.** feeling or showing shared feelings, pity or compassion **2.** relating to or belonging to the sympathetic nervous system, or to one of its parts

**sympathetic nervous system** /,sɪmpə'tetɪk 'nɜ:vəs ,sɪstəm/, **sympathetic system** /,sɪmpə'tetɪk 'sɪstəm/ *noun* part of the autonomic nervous system, which leaves the spinal cord from the thoracic and lumbar regions to go to various important organs such as the heart, the lungs and the sweat glands, and which prepares the body for emergencies and vigorous muscular activity. † **parasympathetic nervous system**

**sympatholytic** /,sɪmpəθəu'litɪk/ *noun* a drug which stops the sympathetic nervous system working

**sympathomimetic** /,sɪmpəθəu'metɪk/ *adjective* referring to a drug such as dopamine hydrochloride which stimulates the activity of the sympathetic nervous system and is used in cardiac shock following myocardial infarction and in cardiac surgery

**sympathy** /'sɪmpəθi/ *noun* **1.** the feeling or expression of pity or sorrow for the pain or distress of somebody else **2.** the relationship between people which causes one of them to provoke a similar condition to their own in the other one. For example, when the first person yawns, the second feels an urge to yawn too. **3.** the influence produced on any part of the body by disease or change in another part

**sympysis** /'sɪmfəsis/ *noun* the point where two bones are joined by cartilage which makes the joint rigid

**sympysis pubis** /,sɪmfəsis 'pju:bɪs/ *noun* same as **pubic symphysis**

**symptom** /'sɪmptəm/ *noun* a change in the way the body works or a change in the body's appearance, which shows that a disease or disorder is present and which the person is aware of ○ *The symptoms of hay fever are a running nose and eyes.* ○ *A doctor must study the symptoms before making his diagnosis.* ○ *The patient presented all the symptoms of rheumatic fever.* (NOTE: If a symptom is noticed only by the doctor, it is a **sign**.)

**symptomatic** /,sɪmptə'mætɪk/ *adjective* being a symptom of something ○ *The rash is symptomatic of measles.*

**symptomatology** /,sɪmptəmə'tɒlədʒi/ *noun* a branch of medicine concerned with the study of symptoms. Also called **semiology**

**syn-** /sɪn/ *prefix* joint, or fused

**synalgia** /sɪ'nælɪdʒə/ *noun* a pain which is felt in one part of the body, but is caused by a condition in another part, e.g. pain in the groin which can be a symptom of a kidney stone or pain in the right shoulder which can indicate gall bladder infection. Also called **referred pain**

**synapse** /'saɪnæps/ *noun* a point in the nervous system where the axons of neurones are in contact with the dendrites of other neurones ■ *verb* to link something with a neurone

**synaptic** /sɪn'æptɪk/ *adjective* referring to a synapse

**synarthrosis** /,sɪnɑ:'θɑ:ʊsɪs/ *noun* a joint, e.g. in the skull, where the bones have fused together

**synchondrosis** /,sɪnɔn'drəʊsɪs/ *noun* a joint, as in children, where the bones are linked by cartilage, before the cartilage has changed to bone

**synchysis** /'sɪŋkɪsɪs/ *noun* a condition in which the vitreous humour in the eye becomes soft

**syncope** /'sɪŋkəpi/ *noun* a condition in which someone becomes unconscious for a short time because of reduced flow of blood to the brain. Also called **fainting fit**

**syndactyly** /sɪn'dæktɪli/, **syndactylism** /sɪn'dæktɪlɪz(ə)m/ *noun* a condition in which two toes or fingers are joined together with tissue

**syndesmo-** /sɪndesm/, **syndesmo-** /sɪndesməʊ/ *prefix* referring to ligaments

**syndesmology** /,sɪndes'mɒlədʒi/ *noun* a branch of medicine which studies joints

**syndesmosis** /,sɪndes'məʊsɪs/ *noun* a joint where the bones are tightly linked by ligaments

**syndrome** /'sɪndrəʊnm/ *noun* a group of symptoms and other changes in the body's functions which, when taken together, show that a particular disease is present

**synechia** /sɪ'nekɪə/ *noun* a condition in which the iris sticks to another part of the eye

**synergism** /'sɪnədʒɪz(ə)m/ *noun* a situation where two or more things are acting together in such a way that both are more effective. Also called **synergy**

**synergist** /'sɪnədʒɪst/ *noun* a muscle or drug which acts with another and increases the effectiveness of both

**synergy** /'sɪnədʒi/ *noun* same as **synergism**

**syngeneic** /,sɪndʒə'ni:ɪk/ *adjective* referring to individuals or tissues that have an identical or closely similar genetic make-up, especially one that will allow the transplanting of tissue without provoking an immune response

**synostosed** /'sɪnɒstəʊzɪd/ *adjective* (of bones) fused together with new bone tissue

**synostosis** /ˌsɪnɒˈstəʊsɪs/ *noun* the fusing of two bones together by the formation of new bone tissue

**synovectomy** /ˌsɪnəʊˈvektəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to remove the synovial membrane of a joint

**synovia** /saɪˈnəʊviəl/ *noun* same as **synovial fluid**

**synovial** /saɪˈnəʊviəl/ *adjective* referring to the synovium

**synovial fluid** /saɪˈnəʊviəl ˈfluːɪd/ *noun* a fluid secreted by a synovial membrane to lubricate a joint. See illustration at **SYNOVIAL JOINT** in Supplement

**synovial joint** /saɪˈnəʊviəl ˈdʒɔɪnt/ *noun* a joint where the two bones are separated by a space filled with synovial fluid which nourishes and lubricates the surfaces of the bones. Also called **diarthrosis**

**synovial membrane** /saɪˈnəʊviəl ˈmembreɪn/, **synovium** *noun* a smooth membrane which forms the inner lining of the capsule covering a joint and secretes the fluid which lubricates the joint. See illustration at **SYNOVIAL JOINT** in Supplement

**synovitis** /ˌsɪnəʊˈvaɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the synovial membrane

**synthesis** /ˈsɪnθəʊsɪs/ *noun* **1.** the process of combining different ideas or objects into a new whole **2.** a new unified whole resulting from the combination of different ideas or objects **3.** the formation of compounds through chemical reactions involving simpler compounds or elements **4.** in psychiatry, the fusing together of all the various elements of the personality (NOTE: The plural is **syntheses**.)

**synthesise** /ˈsɪnθəsaɪz/, **synthesize** *verb* to make a chemical compound from its separate components ○ *Essential amino acids cannot be synthesised.* ○ *The body cannot synthesise essential fatty acids and has to absorb them from food.*

**synthetic** /sɪnˈθetɪk/ *adjective* made by humans, made artificially

**syphilis** /ˈsɪfəlɪs/ *noun* a sexually transmitted disease caused by a spirochaete *Treponema pallidum*

**syring-** /sɪrɪndʒ/ *prefix* same as **syringo-** (used before vowels)

**syringe** /sɪˈrɪndʒ/ *noun* a medical instrument made of a tube with a plunger which either slides down inside the tube, forcing the contents out through a needle as in an injection, or slides up the tube, allowing a liquid to be sucked into it ■ *verb* to wash out the ears using a syringe

**syringo-** /sɪrɪŋɡəʊ/ *prefix* referring to tubes, especially the central canal of the spinal cord

**syringomyelia** /sɪˌrɪŋɡəʊmaɪˈɪliə/ *noun* a disease which forms cavities in the neck section of the spinal cord, affecting the nerves so that the person loses the sense of touch and pain

**syringomyelitis** /sɪˌrɪŋɡəʊmaɪˈɪlaɪtɪs/ *noun* a swelling of the spinal cord, which results in the formation of cavities in it

**syringomyelocoele** /sɪˌrɪŋɡəʊˈmaɪələʊsiːl/ *noun* a severe form of spina bifida where the spinal cord pushes through a hole in the spine

**system** /ˈsɪstəm/ *noun* **1.** the body as a whole ○ *Amputation of a limb gives a serious shock to the system.* **2.** the arrangement of particular parts of the body so that they work together ○ *the lymphatic system*

**systemic** /sɪˈstiːmɪk/ *adjective* referring to or affecting the whole body ○ *Septicaemia is a systemic infection.*

**systemic circulation** /sɪˌstiːmɪk ˌsɜːkjʊˈleɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the circulation of blood around the whole body, except the lungs, starting with the aorta and returning through the venae cavae

**systemic lupus erythematosus** /sɪˌstiːmɪk ˌluːpəs ˌeɪθiːməˈtəʊsəs/ *noun* one of several collagen diseases which are forms of lupus, where red patches form on the skin and spread throughout the body. Abbreviation **SLE**

**systole** /sɪˈstəʊli/ *noun* a phase in the beating of the heart when it contracts as it pumps blood out

**systolic** /sɪˈstɒlɪk/ *adjective* referring to the systole

**systolic murmur** /sɪˈstɒlɪk ˈmɜːmə/ *noun* a sound produced during systole which indicates an unusual condition of a heart valve

**systolic pressure** /sɪˈstɒlɪk ˈpreʃə/ *noun* the high point of blood pressure which occurs during the systole. Systolic pressure is always higher than diastolic pressure.

# T

**TAB** *abbreviation* typhoid-paratyphoid A and B  
○ *He was given a TAB injection.* ○ *TAB injections give only temporary immunity against paratyphoid.* ♯ **TAB vaccine**

**tabes** /'teɪbi:z/ *noun* a condition in which someone is wasting away

**tabes dorsalis** /,teɪbi:z dɔ:'seɪlɪs/ *noun* a disease of the nervous system, caused by advanced syphilis, in which the person loses the sense of feeling, control of the bladder and the ability to coordinate movements of the legs, and has severe pains. Also called **locomotor ataxia**

**tablet** /'tæblət/ *noun* **1.** a small flat round object containing medicine that is taken by swallowing  
○ *a bottle of aspirin tablets* ○ *Take two tablets three times a day.* **2.** any tablet, pill or capsule taken by swallowing (*informal*)

**taboparesis** /,teɪbəʊpə'ri:si:s/ *noun* the final stage of syphilis in which the person has locomotor ataxia, general paralysis and mental deterioration

**TAB vaccine** /,ti: ei: 'bi: ,væksi:n/ *noun* a vaccine which immunises against typhoid fever and paratyphoid A and B

**tachy-** /tæki/ *prefix* fast

**tachycardia** /,tæki'kɑ:diə/ *noun* a rapid beating of the heart

**tachyphrasia** /,tæki'freɪziə/, **tachyphasia** /,tæki'feɪziə/ *noun* a particularly rapid way of speaking, as occurs with some people with mental disorders

**tachypnoea** /,tæki'pni:ə/ *noun* very fast breathing

**tacrolimus** /,tækrə'li:məs/ *noun* a powerful immunosuppressant drug used to reduce the risk of organ transplant rejection

**tactile** /'tæktail/ *adjective* able to be sensed by touch

**taeniasis** /ti:'naɪəsɪs/ *noun* infestation of the intestines with tapeworms

**Tagamet** /'tægəmet/ a trade name for a preparation of cimetidine

**tai chi** /,tai 'tʃi:/, **t'ai chi** *noun* an ancient Chinese system of exercises designed for health, self-defence and spiritual development

**talc** /tælk/ *noun* a soft white powder used to dust on irritated skin

**talipes** /'tælɪpi:z/ *noun* a foot with a shape that does not allow usual walking, a congenital condition. Also called **cleft foot**, **club foot**

**talo-** /teɪləʊ/ *prefix* referring to the ankle bone

**talus** /'teɪləs/ *noun* the top bone in the tarsus which articulates with the tibia and fibula in the leg, and with the calcaneus in the heel. Also called **anklebone**. See illustration at **FOOT** in Supplement (NOTE: The plural is **tali**.)

**tamoxifen** /tə'mɒksɪfen/ *noun* a drug which helps to prevent the actions of oestrogen, used especially in the treatment of breast cancer and some types of infertility

**tampon** /'tæmpən/ *noun* **1.** a wad of absorbent material put into a wound to soak up blood during an operation **2.** a cylindrical plug of soft material put into the vagina to absorb blood during menstruation

**tamponade** /,tæmpə'neɪd/ *noun* the action of putting a tampon into a wound

**tan** /tæn/ *verb* (*of skin*) to become brown in sunlight ○ *He tans easily.* ○ *She is using a tanning lotion.*

**tantalum** /'tæntələm/ *noun* a rare metal, used to repair damaged bones (NOTE: The chemical symbol is **Ta**.)

**tantalum mesh** /'tæntələm meʃ/ *noun* a type of net made of tantalum wire, used to repair cranial conditions

**tantrum** /'tænrəm/ *noun* a sudden episode of bad behaviour, usually in a child, where the child throws things or lies on the floor and screams

**tap** /tæp/ *noun* a surgical procedure to drain off body fluid with a hollow needle or a tube ■ *verb* to remove or drain liquid from part of the body. ♯

**spinal**

**tapeworm** /'teɪpwɜ:m/ *noun* a parasitic worm with a small head and long body like a ribbon. Tapeworms enter the intestine when a person eats raw meat or fish. The worms attach themselves with hooks to the side of the intestine and grow longer by adding sections to their bodies.



**tapotement** /tə'pəʊtmənt/ *noun* a type of massage where the therapist taps the person with his or her hands

**tapping** /'tæpɪŋ/ *noun* same as **paracentesis**

**tarry stool** /,tɑ:ri 'stʊ:l/ *noun* dark and sticky solid matter which is passed out of the bowels

**tars-** /tɑ:s/ *prefix* same as **tarso-** (used before vowels)

**tarsal** /'tɑ:s(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to the tarsus  
**■ noun** same as **tarsal bone**

**tarsal bone** /'tɑ:s(ə)l bəʊn/ *noun* one of seven small bones in the ankle, including the talus and calcaneus. Also called **tarsal**

**tarsalgia** /tɑ:'sælɪdʒə/ *noun* a pain in the ankle

**tarsal gland** /'tɑ:s(ə)l glænd/ *noun* same as **meibomian gland**

**tarsectomy** /tɑ:'sektəmi/ *noun* **1.** a surgical operation to remove one of the tarsal bones in the ankle **2.** a surgical operation to remove the tarsus of the eyelid

**tarsitis** /tɑ:'sɑ:ɪtɪs/ *noun* an inflammation of the edge of the eyelid

**tarso-** /tɑ:'səʊ/ *prefix* **1.** relating to the ankle **2.** relating to the edge of the eyelid

**tarsorrhaphy** /tɑ:'sɒrəfi/ *noun* an operation to join the two eyelids together to protect the eye after an operation

**tarsus** /'tɑ:səs/ *noun* **1.** the seven small bones of the ankle. See illustration at **FOOT** in Supplement **2.** a connective tissue which supports an eyelid (NOTE: The plural is **tarsi**.)

**tartar** /'tɑ:təl/ *noun* a hard deposit of calcium which forms on teeth, and has to be removed by scaling. Also called **scale**

**task allocation** /'tɑ:sk ələ'keɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a system in which patient care is divided into tasks which are given to different nurses with specific skills

**taste** /teɪst/ *noun* one of the five senses, where food or substances in the mouth are noticed through the tongue ○ *She doesn't like the taste of onions.* ○ *He has a cold, so food seems to have lost all taste or seems to have no taste.* **■ verb** to notice the taste of something with the tongue ○ *I have a cold so I can't taste anything* ○ *You can taste the salt in this butter.*

**taste bud** /'teɪst bʌd/ *noun* a tiny sensory receptor in the vallate and fungiform papillae of the tongue and in part of the back of the mouth

COMMENT: The taste buds can tell the difference between salt, sour, bitter and sweet tastes. The buds on the tip of the tongue identify salt and sweet tastes, those on the sides of the tongue identify sour, and those at the back of the mouth the bitter tastes. Note that most of what we think of as taste is in fact smell, and this is why when someone has a cold and a blocked nose, food seems to lose its taste. The impulses from the taste

buds are received by the taste cortex in the temporal lobe of the cerebral hemisphere.

**taxis** /'tæksɪs/ *noun* the procedure of pushing or massaging dislocated bones or hernias to make them return to their usual position

**-taxis** /tæksɪs/ *suffix* manipulation

**taxonomy** /tæk'sɒnəmi/ *noun* **1.** the practice or principles of classification generally ○ *Any diagnostic task can be aided by a taxonomy of symptoms and a taxonomy of causes together with connections between them.* **2.** the science of classifying plants, animals and microorganisms into increasingly broader categories based on shared features. Traditionally, organisms were grouped by physical resemblances, but recently other criteria such as genetic matching have also been used.

**Tay-Sachs disease** /,teɪ 'sæks dɪ,zɪ:z/ *noun* an inherited condition affecting the metabolism, characterised by progressive paralysis of the legs, blindness and learning disabilities [Described 1881. After Warren Tay (1843–1927), British ophthalmologist; Bernard Sachs (1858–1944), US neurologist.]

**TB** *abbreviation* tuberculosis ○ *He is suffering from TB.* ○ *She has been admitted to a TB sanatorium.*

**TBI** *abbreviation* total body irradiation

**T-cell** /'ti: sel/ *noun* same as **T-lymphocyte**

**TCP** /,ti: si: 'pi:/ a trade name for various mild antiseptic liquids

**t.d.s.** /,ti: di: 'es/, **TDS** *adverb* (written on prescriptions) three times a day. Full form **ter in diem sumendus**

**teaching hospital** /'ti:tʃɪŋ ,hɒspɪt(ə)l/ *noun* a hospital attached to a medical school where student doctors work and study as part of their training

**team nursing** /'ti:m ,nɜ:sɪŋ/ *noun* a system in which the care of a group of patients is assigned to a team of four or five health workers, led by a professional nurse who assigns them various tasks. They meet at the beginning and end of each shift to exchange information.

**tear** /tɪə/ *noun* a drop of the salty fluid which forms in the lacrimal gland. The fluid keeps the eyeball moist and clean and is produced in large quantities when a person cries. ○ *Tears ran down her face.* (NOTE: For other terms referring to tears, see words beginning with **dacryo-** or **lacrimal**.)

**tear duct** /'tɪə dʌkt/ *noun* same as **lacrimal duct**

**tear gland** /'tɪə glænd/ *noun* same as **lacrimal gland**

**teat** /ti:t/ *noun* a rubber nipple on the end of a baby's feeding bottle

**TED** *abbreviation* thrombo-embolic deterrent stocking

**teeth** /ti:θ/ plural of **tooth**

**Teflon** /'teflɒn/ *trademark* a synthetic polymer injected into the joints of the larynx to increase movement and help hoarseness of voice

**tegmen** /'tegmən/ *noun* the covering for an organ (NOTE: The plural is **tegmina**.)

**tegument** /'teɡjʊmənt/ *noun* a covering, especially the protective outer covering of an organism

**tel-** /te/ *prefix* same as **tele-** (used before vowels)

**tela** /'ti:lə/ *noun* a delicate part or tissue in the body with a fine or intricate pattern like a web

**telangiectasis** /te,lændʒi'ektəsis/, **telangiectasia** /te,lændʒi'ektəsiə/ *noun* small dark red spots on the skin, formed by swollen capillaries

**telangioma** /te,lændʒi'əʊmə/ *noun* a tumour or haematoma of the blood capillaries

**tele-** /teli/ *prefix* referring to distance

**teleceptor** /'telseptə/ *noun* a sensory receptor which receives sensations from a distance. These occur in the eyes, ears and nose. Also called **telereceptor**

**telemedicine** /'telimedi(ə)sɪn/ *noun* the provision of diagnosis and health care from a distance using media such as interactive computer programs or off-site advisers

**telencephalon** /,telen'kefəlon/ *noun* same as **cerebrum**

**telepathy** /tə'lepəθi/ *noun* the apparent communication directly from one person's mind to another person's, without the use of speech, writing or other signs or symbols

**telerradiology** /,telireidi'blədʒi/ *noun* the process of transmitting scans and other images electronically so that they can be viewed by surgeons or other health care workers in different locations at the same time

**telereceptor** /'teliri,septə/ *noun* same as **teleceptor**

**telophase** /'teləufeɪz/ *noun* the final stage of mitosis, the stage in cell division after anaphase

**temazepam** /tə'mæzi:pəm/ *noun* a hypnotic drug used in the short-term treatment of insomnia

**temperature** /'temprɪtʃə/ *noun* the heat of the body or of the surrounding air, measured in degrees ○ *The doctor asked the nurse what the patient's temperature was.* ○ *His temperature was slightly above normal.* ○ *The thermometer showed a temperature of 99°F.*

**temperature chart** /'temprɪtʃə tʃɑ:t/ *noun* a chart showing changes in a person's temperature over a period of time

**temple** /'tempəl/ *noun* the flat part of the side of the head between the top of the ear and the eye

**temporal** /'temp(ə)rəl/ *adjective* referring to the temple

**temporal arteritis** /,temp(ə)rəl ,ɑ:tə'raɪtɪs/ *noun* a headache caused by inflammation of the region over the temporal artery, usually occurring in older people

**temporal bone** /'tempərəl bæʊn/ *noun* one of the bones which form the sides and base of the cranium. See illustration at **EAR** in Supplement

**temporalis** /,tempə'reɪlɪs/, **temporalis muscle** /,tempə'reɪlɪs ,mʌs(ə)l/ *noun* a flat muscle running down the side of the head from the temporal bone to the coronoid process, which makes the jaw move up

**temporal lobe** /'temp(ə)rəl læʊb/ *noun* the lobe above the ear in each cerebral hemisphere

**temporal lobe epilepsy** /,temp(ə)rəl læʊb 'epilepsi/ *noun* epilepsy due to a disorder of the temporal lobe and causing impaired memory, hallucinations and automatism

**temporo-** /tempərəʊ/ *prefix* 1. referring to the temple 2. referring to the temporal lobe

**temporomandibular** /,tempərəʊməən 'dɪbjʊlə/ *adjective* relating to the temporal bone and the mandible

**temporomandibular joint** /,tempərəʊməən 'dɪbjʊlə ,dʒɔɪnt/ *noun* a joint between the jaw and the skull, in front of the ear

**tenacious** /tɪ'neɪʃəs/ *adjective* sticking or clinging to something else, especially a surface

**tenaculum** /tə'nækjʊləm/ *noun* a surgical instrument shaped like a hook, used to pick up small pieces of tissue during an operation

**tender** /'tendə/ *adjective* referring to skin or a body part which is painful when touched ○ *The bruise is still tender.* ○ *Her shoulders are still tender where she got sunburnt.* ○ *A tender spot on the abdomen indicates that an organ is inflamed.*

**tendinitis** /,tendɪ'naitɪs/ *noun* an inflammation of a tendon, especially after playing sport, and often associated with tenosynovitis

**tendinous** /'tendɪnəs/ *adjective* referring to a tendon

**tendon** /'tendən/ *noun* a strip of connective tissue which attaches a muscle to a bone. Also called **sinew** (NOTE: For other terms referring to a tendon, see words beginning with **teno-**.)

**tendonitis** /,tendə'naitɪs/ *noun* same as **tendinitis**

**tendon sheath** /'tendən ʃi:θ/ *noun* a tube of membrane which covers and protects a tendon

**tendovaginitis** /,tendəʊvædʒɪ'naitɪs/ *noun* an inflammation of a tendon sheath, especially in the thumb

**tenens** /'tenənz/ † **locum**

**tenesmus** /tə'nezməs/ *noun* a condition in which someone feels the need to pass faeces, or sometimes urine, but is unable to do so and experiences pain

**tennis elbow** /,tɛnɪs 'ɛlbəʊ/ *noun* an inflammation of the tendons of the extensor muscles in the hand which are attached to the bone near the elbow. Also called **lateral epicondylitis**

**teno-** /tɛnəʊ/ *prefix* referring to a tendon

**tenonitis** /,tɛnəʊ'naitɪs/ *noun* the inflammation of a tendon

**Tenon's capsule** /'ti:nɒns ,kæpsju:l/ *noun* a tissue which lines the orbit of the eye [After Jacques René Tenon (1724–1816), French surgeon.]

**tenoplasty** /'tɛnəplæsti/ *noun* a surgical operation to repair a torn tendon

**tenorrhaphy** /tɛ'nɒrəfi/ *noun* a surgical operation to stitch pieces of a torn tendon together

**tenosynovitis** /,tɛnəʊ,sainə'vaɪtɪs/ *noun* a painful inflammation of the tendon sheath and the tendon inside. Also called **peritendinitis**

**tenotomy** /tɛ'nɒtəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to cut through a tendon

**tenovaginitis** /,tɛnəʊ,vædʒɪ'naitɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the tendon sheath, especially in the thumb

**TENS** /tɛns/ *abbreviation* a method of treating pain by applying electrodes to the skin. Small electric currents are passed through sensory nerves and the spinal cord. This suppresses the transmission of pain signals. ○ a **TENS unit** or *machine* Full form **transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation**

**tension** /'tɛnʃən/ *noun* **1.** the act of stretching or the state of being stretched **2.** an emotional strain or stress

**tension headache** /'tɛnʃən ,hedetk/ *noun* a headache all over the head, caused by worry and stress

**tension pneumothorax** /'tɛnʃən nju:məʊ ,θɔ:ræks/ *noun* a condition of the pneumothorax in which rupture of the pleura forms an opening like a valve, through which air is forced during coughing but cannot escape

**tensor** /'tɛnsə/ *noun* a muscle which makes a joint stretch out

**tent** /tɛnt/ *noun* a small shelter put over and around someone's bed so that gas or vapour can be passed inside

**tera-** /tɛrə/ *prefix* 10<sup>12</sup>. Symbol **T**

**terat-** /tɛrət/, **terato-** /tɛrətəʊ/ *prefix* congenitally unusual

**teratogen** /tə'rætədʒɛn/ *noun* a substance which causes the usual development of an embryo or fetus to be disrupted, e.g. the German measles virus

**teratogenesis** /,tɛrətə'dʒɛnəɪsɪs/ *noun* an unusual pattern of development in an embryo and fetus

**teratogenic** /,tɛrətə'dʒɛnɪk/ *adjective* **1.** having the tendency to produce physical disorders in

an embryo or fetus **2.** relating to the production of physical disorders in an embryo or fetus

**teratology** /,tɛrə'tɒlədʒi/ *noun* the study of the unhealthy development of embryos and fetuses

**teratoma** /,tɛrətə'təʊmə/ *noun* a tumour, especially in an ovary or testis, which is formed of tissue not usually found in that part of the body

**terbutaline** /tɜ:'bjʊ:təli:n/ *noun* a drug which relaxes muscles, used in the treatment of respiratory disorders and to control premature labour

**teres** /'tɛəri:z/ *noun* one of two shoulder muscles running from the shoulder blade to the top of the humerus. The larger of the two muscles, the *teres major*, makes the arm turn towards the inside, and the smaller, the *teres minor*, makes it turn towards the outside.

**terfenadine** /tɜ:'fɛnədi:n/ *noun* an antihistamine used in the treatment of hay fever and urticaria

**terminal branch** /'tɜ:mɪn(ə)l brɑ:ntʃ/ *noun* the end part of a neurone which is linked to a muscle. See illustration at **NEURONE** in Supplement

**terminal illness** /,tɜ:mɪn(ə)l 'ɪlnəs/ *noun* an illness from which someone will soon die

**terminally ill** /,tɜ:mɪnəli 'ɪl/ *adjective* very ill and about to die ○ *She was admitted to a hospice for terminally ill patients or for the terminally ill.*

**-terol** /tɛrəl/ *suffix* used in names of bronchodilators

**tertian** /'tɜ:ʃ(ə)n/ *adjective* referring to a fever with symptoms which appear every other day ■ *noun* a tertian fever or set of symptoms

**tertian fever** /'tɜ:ʃ(ə)n ,fi:və/ *noun* a type of malaria where the fever returns every two days. ◇

**quartan fever**

**tertiary** /'tɜ:ʃəri/ *adjective* third, coming after secondary and primary

**tertiary bronchi** /,tɜ:ʃəri 'brɒŋki/ *plural noun* ▶ **syphilis**

**tertiary care** /,tɜ:ʃəri 'keə/, **tertiary health care** /,tɜ:ʃəri 'helθ ,keə/ *noun* highly specialised treatment given in a health care centre, often using very advanced technology. Compare **primary care**, **secondary care**

**test** /tɛst/ *noun* a short examination to see if a sample is healthy or if part of the body is working well ○ *He had an eye test this morning.* ○ *Laboratory tests showed that she was a meningitis carrier.* ○ *Tests are being carried out on swabs taken from the operating theatre.*

**testicle** /'tɛstɪk(ə)l/ *noun* same as **testis**

**testicular** /tɛ'stɪkjʊlə/ *adjective* referring to the testes ○ *Testicular cancer comprises only 1% of all malignant neoplasms in the male.*

**testicular artery** /tɛ'stɪkjʊlə 'ɑ:təri/ *noun* same as **spermatric artery**

**testis** /'tɛstɪs/ *noun* one of two male sex glands in the scrotum. See illustration at **UROGENITAL**

**SYSTEM (MALE)** in Supplement. Also called **testicle** (NOTE: The plural is **testes**. For other terms referring to the testes, see words beginning with **orchi-**.)

COMMENT: The testes produce both spermatozoa and the sex hormone, testosterone. Spermatozoa are formed in the testes, and passed into the epididymis to be stored. From the epididymis they pass along the vas deferens through the prostate gland which secretes the seminal fluid, and are ejaculated through the penis.

**test meal** /'test mi:l/ *noun* a test to check the secretion of gastric juices, no longer much used

**testosterone** /te'stɒstərən/ *noun* a male sex hormone, secreted by the Leydig cells in the testes, which causes physical changes, e.g. the development of body hair and a deep voice, to take place in males as they become sexually mature

**test tube** /'test tju:b/ *noun* a small glass tube with a rounded bottom, used in laboratories to hold samples of liquids

**test-tube baby** /'test tju:b 'beibi/ *noun* a baby conceived through in vitro fertilisation in which the mother's ova are removed from the ovaries, fertilised with a man's spermatozoa in a laboratory, and returned to the mother's uterus to continue developing in the usual way

**tetanic** /te'tænik/ *adjective* referring to tetanus

**tetano-** /tetənəʊ/ *prefix* **1.** relating to tetanus **2.** relating to tetany

**tetanus** /'tet(ə)nəs/ *noun* **1.** the continuous contraction of a muscle, under repeated stimuli from a motor nerve **2.** an infection caused by *Clostridium tetani* in the soil, which affects the spinal cord and causes spasms in the muscles which occur first in the jaw. Also called **lockjaw**

**tetany** /'tetəni/ *noun* spasms of the muscles in the feet and hands, caused by a reduction in the level of calcium in the blood or by lack of carbon dioxide

**tetra-** /tetrə/ *prefix* four

**tetracycline** /,tetrə'saɪkli:n/ *noun* an antibiotic of a group used to treat a wide range of bacterial diseases such as chlamydia. However, they are deposited in bones and teeth and cause a permanent yellow stain in teeth if given to children.

**tetralogy of Fallot** /te,tɾælədʒi əv 'fæləʊ/ *noun* a disorder of the heart which makes a child's skin blue. Also called **Fallot's tetralogy**. ◊ **Black's operation**, **Waterston's operation** [Described 1888. After Etienne-Louis Arthur Fallot (1850–1911), Professor of Hygiene and Legal Medicine at Marseilles, France.]

**tetraplegia** /,tetɾə'pli:dʒə/ same as **quadriplegia**

**thalam-** /θæləm/ *prefix* same as **thalamo-** (used before vowels)

**thalamo-** /θæləməʊ/ *prefix* referring to the thalamus

**thalamus** /'θæləməs/ *noun* one of two masses of grey matter situated beneath the cerebrum where impulses from the sensory neurones are transmitted to the cerebral cortex. See illustration at **BRAIN** in Supplement (NOTE: The plural is **thalami**.)

**thalassaemia** /θælə'si:miə/ *noun* a hereditary disorder of which there are several forms caused by an anomalies in the protein component of the haemoglobin, leading to severe anaemia. It is found especially in people from Mediterranean countries, the Middle East and East Asia. Also called **Cooley's anaemia**

**thalidomide** /θə'lidəmaɪd/ *noun* a synthetic drug given to pregnant women for morning sickness in the 1960s which caused babies to be born with stunted limbs. It is now used in the treatment of leprosy.

**thallium scan** /'θæliəm skæn/ *noun* a method of finding out about the blood supply to the heart muscle by scanning to see how the radioactive element thallium moves when injected into the bloodstream and where it attaches itself to the heart wall

**thanatology** /,θænə'tɒlədʒi/ *noun* the study of the medical, psychological and sociological aspects of death and the ways in which people deal with it

**theatre nurse** /'θiətə nɜ:s/ *noun* a nurse who is specially trained to assist a surgeon during an operation

**theca** /'θi:kə/ *noun* tissue shaped like a sheath

**thelarche** /'θelɑ:ki/ *noun* the beginning of the process of breast development in young women

**thenar** /'θi:nə/ *adjective* referring to the palm of the hand ■ *noun* the palm of the hand. Compare **hypothenar**

**thenar eminence** /,θi:nə 'emɪnəns/ *noun* the ball of the thumb, the lump of flesh in the palm of the hand below the thumb

**theophylline** /θi'ɒfɪli:n/ *noun* a compound made synthetically or extracted from tea leaves which helps to widen blood vessels and airways, and to stimulate the central nervous system and heart. It is used in the treatment of breathing disorders.

**therapeutic** /,θerə'pjʊ:tɪk/ *adjective* given in order to cure a disorder or disease

**therapeutic abortion** /,θerə'pjʊ:tɪk ə 'bɔ:ʃ(ə)n/ *noun* an abortion which is carried out because the health of the mother is in danger

**therapeutic index** /,θerə'pjʊ:tɪk 'ɪndeks/ *noun* the ratio of the dose of a drug which causes cell damage to the dose of that drug which is typically needed to effect a cure, by which the safety of the drug is decided

**therapeutic radiographer** /θerəˈpju:tɪk ˌreɪdɪˈnɒgrəfəl/ *noun* someone specially trained to use X-rays or radioactive isotopes in the treatment of patients

**therapeutics** /θerəˈpju:tɪks/ *noun* the study of various types of treatment and their effect on patients

**therapist** /θerəˈpɪst/ *noun* a person specially trained to give therapy ○ *an occupational therapist* ⇨ **psychotherapist**

**therapy** /θerəˈpi/ *noun* the treatment of a person to help cure a disease or disorder

**therm** /θɜ:m/ *noun* a unit of heat equal to 100,000 British thermal units or  $1.055 \times 10^8$  joules

**thermal** /θɜ:m(ə)/ *adjective* referring to heat

**thermo-** /θɜ:məʊ/ *prefix* referring to heat or temperature

**thermoanaesthesia** /θɜ:məʊ.ænəsˈθi:ziə/ *noun* a condition in which someone cannot tell the difference between hot and cold

**thermocautery** /θɜ:məʊˈkɔ:əri/ *noun* the procedure of removing dead tissue by heat

**thermogram** /θɜ:məgræm/ *noun* an infrared photograph of part of the body

**thermography** /θɜ:məgrəfi/ *noun* a technique, used especially in screening for breast cancer, where part of the body is photographed using infrared rays which record the heat given off by the skin and show variations in the blood circulating beneath the skin

**thermolysis** /θɜ:mələsɪs/ *noun* a loss of body temperature, e.g. by sweating

**thermometer** /θɜ:məmitə/ *noun* an instrument for measuring temperature

**thermoreceptor** /θɜ:məʊriˈseptə/ *noun* a sensory nerve which registers heat

**thermotaxis** /θɜ:məʊˈtæksɪs/ *noun* an automatic regulation of the body's temperature

**thermotherapy** /θɜ:məʊθerəpi/ *noun* treatment using heat, e.g. from hot water or infrared lamps, to treat conditions such as arthritis and bad circulation. Also called **heat therapy**

**thiamine** /θaɪəmi:n/, **thiamin** /θaɪəmɪn/ *noun* same as **Vitamin B<sub>1</sub>**

**Thiersch graft** /ˈti:ʃ grɑ:ft/, **Thiersch's graft** /ˈti:ʃɪz grɑ:ft/ *noun* same as **split-skin graft**

**thigh** /θaɪ/ *noun* the top part of the leg from the knee to the groin

**thiopental sodium** /θaɪəpənt(ə)l ˈsəʊdiəm/ *noun* a barbiturate drug used as a rapid-acting intravenous general anaesthetic. Also called **thiopentone**

**thiopentone** /θaɪəʊˈpəntəʊn/, **thiopentone sodium** /θaɪəʊpəntəʊn ˈsəʊdiəm/ *noun* same as **thiopental sodium** (NOTE: Its chemical formula is  $C_{11}H_{17}N_2O_2SNa$ .)

**thioridazine** /θaɪəʊˈrɪdæzi:n/ *noun* a synthetic compound used as a tranquilliser for people who are suffering from a psychosis

**third-degree haemorrhoids** /θɜ:d dɪˌɡri: ˈheməʊrɪdɪz/ *plural noun* haemorrhoids which protrude into the anus permanently

**third molar** /θɜ:d ˈməʊlə/ *noun* one of the four molars at the back of the jaw, which only appears at about the age of 20 and sometimes does not appear at all. Same as **wisdom tooth**

**thirst** /θɜ:st/ *noun* a feeling of wanting to drink ○ *He had a fever and a violent thirst.*

**Thomas's splint** /ˈtɒməsɪz splɪnt/, **Thomas splint** /ˈtɒməs splɪnt/ *noun* a metal splint used to keep a fractured leg still. It has a padded ring at the hip attached to rods to which bandages are bound and a bar under the foot at the lower end. [Described 1875. After Hugh Owen Thomas (1834–91), British surgeon and bonesetter.]

**thorac-** /θɔ:ɜ:s/ *prefix* same as **thoraco-** (*used before vowels*)

**thoracectomy** /θɔ:ɜːsektəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to remove one or more ribs

**thoracentesis** /θɔ:ɜːrəsenˈti:ʒɪs/ *noun* same as **thoracocentesis**

**thoracic** /θɔ:ɜːrəsɪk/ *adjective* referring to the chest or thorax

**thoracic cavity** /θɔ:ɜːrəsɪk ˈkævɪti/ *noun* the chest cavity, containing the diaphragm, heart and lungs

**thoracic duct** /θɔ:ɜːrəsɪk dʌkt/ *noun* one of the main terminal ducts carrying lymph, on the left side of the neck

**thoracic vertebrae** /θɔ:ɜːrəsɪk ˈvɜ:ɪbrɪz/ *plural noun* the twelve vertebrae in the spine behind the chest, to which the ribs are attached

**thoraco-** /θɔ:ɜːkəʊ/ *prefix* relating to the thorax  
**thoracocentesis** /θɔ:ɜːkəʊsenˈti:ʒɪs/ *noun* an operation in which a hollow needle is inserted into the pleura to drain fluid

**thoracoscope** /θɔ:ɜːkəʊskəʊp/ *noun* a surgical instrument, like a tube with a light at the end, used to examine the inside of the chest

**thoracoscopy** /θɔ:ɜːkəʊskəpi/ *noun* an examination of the inside of the chest, using a thoracoscope

**thoracotomy** /θɔ:ɜːkəʊtəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to make a hole in the wall of the chest

**thorax** /θɔ:ɜːræks/ *noun* the cavity in the top part of the front of the body above the abdomen, containing the diaphragm, heart and lungs, and surrounded by the ribcage

**threadworm** /θredwɜ:m/ *noun* a thin parasitic worm, *Enterobius vermicularis*, which infests the large intestine and causes itching round the anus. ⇨ **Enterobius**. Also called **pinworm**

**thready pulse** /θredi ˈpʌls/ *noun* a very weak pulse which is hard to detect

**threatened abortion** /θret(ə)nd ə'bo:ʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a possible abortion in the early stages of pregnancy, indicated by bleeding

**threshold** /'θreʃhəʊld/ *noun* the point at which something starts, e.g. where something can be perceived by the body or where a drug starts to have an effect ○ *She has a low hearing threshold.*

**thrill** /θrɪl/ *noun* a vibration which can be felt with the hands

**-thrix** /θrɪks/ *suffix* relating to a hair

**throat** /θrəʊt/ *noun* the top part of the tube which goes down from the mouth to the stomach

**throbbing pain** /,θrɒbɪŋ 'peɪn/ *noun* pain which continues in repeated short attacks

**thrombectomy** /θrɒm'bektəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to remove a blood clot

**thrombin** /'θrɒmbɪn/ *noun* a substance which converts fibrinogen to fibrin and so coagulates blood

**thrombo-** /θrɒmbəʊ/ *prefix* 1. referring to a blood clot 2. referring to thrombosis

**thromboangiitis** /,θrɒmbəʊ,ændʒi'aɪtɪs/ *noun* a condition in which the blood vessels swell and develop blood clots along their walls

**thromboangiitis obliterans** /,θrɒmbəʊændʒi,aɪtɪs əb'ɪtərənz/ *noun* a disease of the arteries in which the blood vessels in a limb, usually the leg, become narrow, causing gangrene. Also called **Buerger's disease**

**thromboarteritis** /,θrɒmbəʊ,ɑ:tə'raɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of an artery caused by thrombosis

**thrombocyte** /'θrɒmbəʊsaɪt/ *noun* same as **platelet**

**thrombocythaemia** /,θrɒmbəʊsar'θi:miə/ *noun* a disease in which someone has an unusually high number of platelets in the blood

**thrombocytopenia** /,θrɒmbəʊ,saɪtəu'pi:niə/ *noun* a condition in which someone has an unusually low number of platelets in the blood

**thrombocytopenic** /,θrɒmbəʊ,saɪtəu'penɪk/ *adjective* referring to thrombocytopenia

**thrombocytosis** /,θrɒmbəʊsar'təʊsɪs/ *noun* an increase in the number of platelets in someone's blood

**thrombo-embolic deterrent stocking** /,θrɒmbəʊ em,bɒlɪk dɪ'terənt ,stɒkɪŋ/ *noun* a support stocking to prevent thrombus formation following surgery. Abbreviation **TED**

**thromboembolism** /,θrɒmbəʊ'embəɪz(ə)m/ *noun* a condition in which a blood clot forms in one part of the body and moves through the blood vessels to block another, usually smaller, part

**thromboendarterectomy** /,θrɒmbəʊ ,endɑ:tə'rektəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to open an artery to remove a blood clot which is blocking it

**thromboendarteritis** /,θrɒmbəʊ,enda:tə 'raɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the inside of an artery, caused by thrombosis

**thrombokinas** /,θrɒmbəʊ'kaɪneɪz/ *noun* an enzyme which converts prothrombin into thrombin, so starting the sequence for coagulation of blood. Also called **thromboplastin**

**thrombolysis** /θrɒm'bɒləsɪs/ *noun* same as **fibrinolysis**

**thrombolytic** /θrɒmbəʊ'ɪtɪk/ *adjective* same as **fibrinolytic**

**thrombophlebitis** /,θrɒmbəʊflɪ'bɑɪtɪs/ *noun* the blocking of a vein by a blood clot, sometimes causing inflammation

**thromboplastin** /,θrɒmbəʊ'plæstɪn/ *noun* same as **thrombokinas**

**thrombosis** /θrɒm'bəʊsɪs/ *noun* the blocking of an artery or vein by a mass of coagulated blood

**thrombus** /'θrɒmbəs/ *noun* same as **blood clot**

**throw up** /,θrəʊ 'ʌp/ *verb* same as **vomit** (*informal*)

**thrush** /θrʌʃ/ *noun* an infection of the mouth or the vagina with the bacterium *Candida albicans*

**thumb** /θʌm/ *noun* the short thick finger, with only two bones, which is separated from the other four fingers on the hand

**thym-** /θaɪm/ *prefix* referring to the thymus gland

**thymectomy** /θaɪ'mektəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to remove the thymus gland

**-thymia** /θaɪmiə/ *suffix* referring to a state of mind

**thymic** /'θaɪmɪk/ *adjective* referring to the thymus gland

**thymine** /'θaɪmi:n/ *noun* one of the four basic chemicals in DNA

**thymol** /'θaɪmɒl/ *noun* a colourless compound which is made synthetically or extracted from thyme oil, used as an antiseptic

**thymus** /'θaɪməs/, **thymus gland** /'θaɪməs glænd/ *noun* an endocrine gland in the front part of the top of the thorax, behind the breastbone

**thyro-** /θaɪrəʊ/ *prefix* referring to the thyroid gland

**thyrocalcitonin** /θaɪrəʊkælsɪ'təʊnɪn/ *noun* same as **calcitonin**

**thyroglossal** /,θaɪrəʊ'glɒs(ə)/ *adjective* referring to the thyroid gland and the throat

**thyroglossal cyst** /,θaɪrəʊglɒs(ə)l 'sɪst/ *noun* a cyst in the front of the neck

**thyroid** /'θaɪrɔɪd/, **thyroid gland** *noun* /'θaɪrɔɪd glænd/ an endocrine gland in the neck, which is activated by the pituitary gland and secretes a hormone which regulates the body's metabolism ■ *adjective* referring to the thyroid gland

**thyroid cartilage** /θaɪrɔɪd 'kɑ:təlɪdʒ/ *noun* a large cartilage in the larynx, part of which forms the Adam's apple. See illustration at **LUNGS** in Supplement

**thyroidectomy** /θaɪrɔɪ'dektəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to remove all or part of the thyroid gland

**thyroid gland** /θaɪrɔɪd glænd/ *noun* same as **thyroid**

**thyroid hormone** /θaɪrɔɪd ,hɔ:məʊn/ *noun* a hormone produced by the thyroid gland

**thyroiditis** /θaɪrɔɪ'daɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the thyroid gland

**thyroid-stimulating hormone** /θaɪrɔɪd ,stɪmjʊleɪtɪŋ ,hɔ:məʊn/ *noun* a hormone secreted by the pituitary gland which stimulates the thyroid gland. Abbreviation **TSH**. Also called **thyrotrophin**

**thyroparathyroidectomy** /θaɪrəʊ,pærə ,θaɪrɔɪ'dektəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to remove the thyroid and parathyroid glands

**thyroplasty** /θaɪrəʊplæsti/ *noun* a surgical procedure performed on the cartilages of the larynx to improve the quality of the voice

**thyrototoxic** /θaɪrəʊ'tɒksɪk/ *adjective* referring to severe hyperthyroidism

**thyrototoxic crisis** /θaɪrəʊ,tɒksɪk 'kraɪsɪs/ *noun* a sudden illness caused by hyperthyroidism

**thyrototoxic goitre** /θaɪrəʊ,tɒksɪk 'gɔɪtə/ *noun* overactivity of the thyroid gland, as in hyperthyroidism

**thyrototoxicosis** /θaɪrəʊtɒksɪ'kəʊsɪs/ *noun* same as **hyperthyroidism**

**thyrotrophin** /θaɪrəʊ'trɒfɪn/ *noun* same as **thyroid-stimulating hormone**

**thyrotrophin-releasing hormone** /θaɪrəʊ ,trɒfɪn rɪ'li:zɪŋ ,hɔ:məʊn/ *noun* a hormone secreted by the hypothalamus, which makes the pituitary gland release thyrotrophin, which in turn stimulates the thyroid gland. Abbreviation **TRH**

**thyroxine** /θaɪ'rɒksɪ:n/ *noun* a hormone produced by the thyroid gland which regulates the body's metabolism and the conversion of food into heat, used in treatment of hypothyroidism

**TIA** *abbreviation* transient ischaemic attack

**tibia** /'tɪbiə/ *noun* the larger of the two long bones in the lower leg between the knee and the ankle. Also called **shinbone**. Compare **fibula**

**tibial** /'tɪbiəl/ *adjective* referring to the tibia

**tibialis** /,tɪbi'eɪlɪs/ *noun* one of two muscles in the lower leg running from the tibia to the foot

**tibial torsion** /,tɪbiəl 'tɔ:ʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a persistent slight twist in the tibia, caused by a cramped position in the uterus. It makes the feet of young children point inwards for up to a year after they begin to walk on their own, but it corrects itself as the leg grows.

**tibio-** /tɪbiəʊ/ *prefix* referring to the tibia

**tibiofibular** /,tɪbiəʊ'fɪbjʊlə/ *adjective* referring to both the tibia and the fibula

**tic** /tɪk/ *noun* an involuntary twitch of the muscles usually in the face (*informal*)

**tic douloureux** /,tɪk ,du:lə'ru:z/ *noun* same as **trigeminal neuralgia**

**tick** /tɪk/ *noun* a tiny parasite which sucks blood from the skin

**t.i.d.** /,ti: aɪ 'di:z/, **TID** *adverb* (used on prescriptions) three times a day. Full form **ter in die**

**tidal air** /'taɪd(ə)l ,eə/, **tidal volume** /,taɪd(ə)l 'vɒljʊ:m/ *noun* the amount of air that passes in and out of the body in breathing

**-tidine** /tɪdɪ:n/ *suffix* used for antihistamine drugs

**timolol** /'tɪməʊl/ *noun* a beta-blocker used in the treatment of migraine, high blood pressure and glaucoma

**tincture** /'tɪŋktʃə/ *noun* a medicinal substance dissolved in alcohol

**tincture of iodine** /,tɪŋktʃə əv 'aɪədi:n/ *noun* a weak solution of iodine in alcohol, used as an antiseptic

**tinia** /'tɪniə/ *noun* ▶ **ringworm**

**tinia barbae** /,tɪniə 'bɑ:bi:/ *noun* a fungal infection in the beard

**tinia capitis** /,tɪniə kə'pɑɪtɪs/ *noun* a fungal infection on the scalp

**tinia pedis** /,tɪniə 'pedɪs/ *noun* same as **athlete's foot**

**tingle** /'tɪŋɡəl/ *verb* to have a pricking or stinging sensation in a body part

**tingling** /'tɪŋɡlɪŋ/ *noun* a feeling of pricking or stinging in a body part ○ *an unpleasant tingling down her arm* ■ *adjective* pricking or stinging ○ *a tingling sensation*

**tinny** /'tɪnɪs/ *noun* a condition in which someone hears a ringing sound in the ears

**tissue** /'tɪʃu:/ *noun* a group of cells that carries out a specific function (NOTE: For other terms referring to tissue, see words beginning with **hist-**, **histo-**)

COMMENT: Most of the body is made up of soft tissue, with the exception of the bones and cartilage. The main types of body tissue are connective, epithelial, muscular and nerve tissue.

**tissue culture** /'tɪʃu: ,kʌltʃə/ *noun* tissue grown in a culture medium in a laboratory

**tissue plasminogen activator** /,tɪʃu: plæz 'mɪnədʒən ,æktɪveɪtə/ *noun* an agent given to cause fibrinolysis in blood clots. Abbreviation **TPA**

**tissue typing** /'tɪʃu: ,taɪpɪŋ/ *noun* the process of identifying various elements in tissue from a donor and comparing them to those of the recipient to see if a transplant is likely to be rejected

**titanium** /taɪ'teɪniəm/ *noun* a light metallic element which does not corrode (NOTE: The chemical symbol is **Ti**.)

**titration** /taɪ'treɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the process of measuring the strength of a solution

**titre** /'ti:tə/ *noun* a measurement of the quantity of antibodies in a serum

**T-lymphocyte** /'ti: ɪɪmfəsaɪt/ *noun* a lymphocyte formed in the thymus gland. Also called **T-cell**

**TNM classification** /,ti: en 'em klæsɪfɪ ɪ'keɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* an internationally agreed standard which is the most widely used means for classifying the extent of cancer. T refers to the size of the tumour, N to the lymph node involvement and M to the presence or absence of metastasis.

**toco-** /təʊkəʊ/ *prefix* referring to childbirth

**tocography** /tə'kɒgrəfɪ/ *noun* the process of recording the contractions of the uterus during childbirth

**tocopherol** /tə'kɒfərəʊl/ *noun* one of a group of fat-soluble compounds which make up vitamin E, found in vegetable oils and leafy green vegetables

**toddler's diarrhoea** /,tɒdləz daɪə'ri:ə/ *noun* a condition in which recurrent loose stools are produced, often containing partially digested food. It usually occurs in children between the ages of one and three years.

**toileting** /'tɔɪlətɪŋ/ *noun* the act of helping someone to perform the actions of urinating or opening their bowels, including helping them to do so if they are unable to get out of bed or are incontinent

**tolbutamide** /tə'l'bju:təmaɪd/ *noun* a drug which lowers blood-glucose levels by stimulating the pancreas to produce more insulin. It is used in the treatment of Type II diabetes.

**tolerance** /'tɒlərəns/ *noun* the ability of the body to tolerate a substance or an action ○ *He has been taking the drug for so long that he has developed a tolerance to it.*

**tolerate** /'tɒləreɪt/ *verb* **1.** not to be affected by the unpleasant effects of something, especially not to experience bad effects from being exposed to something harmful **2.** not to react to a drug through having developed a resistance to it

**-tome** /təʊm/ *suffix* **1.** a cutting instrument **2.** a segment ○ *a dermatome*

**tomo-** /təʊməʊ/ *prefix* referring to cutting or a section

**tomogram** /'təʊməgræm/ *noun* a picture of part of the body taken by tomography

**tomography** /tə'mɒgrəfɪ/ *noun* the scanning of a particular part of the body using X-rays or ultrasound

**-otomy** /təmi/ *suffix* referring to a surgical operation

**tone** /təʊn/ *noun* the slightly tense state of a healthy muscle when it is not fully relaxed. Also called **tonicity**, **tonus**

**tongue** /tʌŋ/ *noun* the long muscular organ inside the mouth which can move and is used for tasting, swallowing and speaking. The top surface is covered with papillae, some of which contain taste buds. ○ *The doctor told him to stick out his tongue and say 'Ah'.* Also called **glossa** (NOTE: For other terms referring to the tongue, see **lingual** and words beginning with **gloss-**, **glosso-**.)

**tongue depressor** /'tʌŋ dɪ'presə/ *noun* an instrument, usually a thin piece of wood, used by a doctor to hold someone's tongue down while the throat is being examined

**tongue-tie** /'tʌŋ taɪ/ *noun* the condition of being unable to move your tongue with the usual amount of freedom, because the small membrane which attaches the tongue to the floor of the mouth is unusually short

**tonic** /'tɒnɪk/ *adjective* referring to a muscle which is contracted ■ *noun* a substance which improves the someone's general health or which makes a tired person more energetic ○ *He is taking a course of iron tonic tablets.* ○ *She asked the doctor to prescribe a tonic for her anaemia.*

**tonicity** /təʊ'nɪsɪti/ *noun* same as tone

**tono-** /təʊnəʊ/ *prefix* referring to pressure

**tonography** /təʊ'nɒgrəfɪ/ *noun* a measurement of the pressure inside an eyeball

**tonometer** /təʊ'nɒmɪtə/ *noun* an instrument which measures the pressure inside an organ, especially the eye

**tonometry** /təʊ'nɒmətri/ *noun* a measurement of pressure inside an organ, especially the eye

**tonsil** /'tɒns(ə)/ *noun* an area of lymphoid tissue at the back of the throat in which lymph circulates and protects the body against germs entering through the mouth. Also called **palatine tonsil**

**tonsillar** /'tɒnsɪlə/ *adjective* referring to the tonsils

**tonsillectomy** /,tɒnsɪ'lektəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to remove the tonsils

**tonsillitis** /,tɒnsɪ'læɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the tonsils

**tonsillotomy** /,tɒnsɪ'lɒtəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to make a cut into the tonsils

**tonus** /'təʊnəs/ *noun* same as tone

**tooth** /tu:θ/ *noun* one of a set of bones in the mouth which are used to chew food (NOTE: The plural is **teeth**. For other terms relating to the teeth, see words beginning with **dent-**.)

**tophus** /'təʊfəs/ *noun* a deposit of solid crystals in the skin or in the joints, especially in someone with gout (NOTE: The plural is **tophi**.)



**topical** /'tɒpɪk(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to a specific area of the external surface of the body ○ *suitable for topical application*

**topical drug** /'tɒpɪk(ə)l drʌg/ *noun* a drug which is applied to a specific external part of the body only

**topically** /'tɒpɪkli/ *adverb* by putting on a specific external part of the body only ○ *The cream is applied topically.*

**topo-** /tɒpə/ *prefix* a place or region

**topographical** /,tɒpə'græfɪk(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to topography

**topography** /tə'pɒgrəfi/ *noun* the description of each particular part of the body

**torpor** /'tɔ:pə/ *noun* a condition in which someone seems sleepy or slow to react

**torsion** /'tɔ:ʃ(ə)n/ *noun* **1.** the twisting of something, or a twisted state **2.** the stress placed on an object which has been twisted

**torso** /'tɔ:səʊ/ *noun* the main part of the body, not including the arms, legs and head. Also called **trunk**

**torticollis** /,tɔ:trɪ'kɒlɪs/ *noun* a condition of the neck, where the head is twisted to one side by contraction of the sternocleidomastoid muscle. Also called **wry neck**

**total recall** /,təʊt(ə)l rɪ'kɔ:l/ *noun* the fact of being able to remember something in complete detail

**Tourette's syndrome** /tu:'rets ,sɪndrəʊm/, **Tourette syndrome** /tu:'ret ,sɪndrəʊm/ *noun* a condition which includes involuntary movements, tics, use of foul language and respiratory disorders. Also called **Gilles de la Tourette Syndrome**

**tourniquet** /'tɔ:nɪkeɪ/ *noun* an instrument or tight bandage wrapped round a limb to constrict an artery, so reducing the flow of blood and stopping bleeding from a wound

**tox-** /tɒks/ *prefix* same as **toxo-** (used before vowels)

**toxaemia** /tɒk'si:miə/ *noun* the presence of poisonous substances in the blood

**toxaemia of pregnancy** /tɒk,sɪ:miə əv 'pregnənsi/ *noun* a condition which can affect women towards the end of pregnancy, in which they develop high blood pressure and pass protein in the urine

**toxic** /'tɒksɪk/ *adjective* poisonous

**toxicity** /tɒk'sɪsɪti/ *noun* **1.** the degree to which a substance is poisonous or harmful **2.** the amount of poisonous or harmful material in a substance

**toxico-** /tɒksɪkəʊ/ *prefix* referring to poison

**toxicologist** /,tɒksɪ'kɒlədʒɪst/ *noun* a scientist who specialises in the study of poisons

**toxicology** /,tɒksɪ'kɒlədʒi/ *noun* the scientific study of poisons and their effects on the human body

**toxicosis** /,tɒksɪ'kəʊsɪs/ *noun* poisoning

**toxic shock syndrome** /,tɒksɪk 'ʃɒk ,sɪndrəʊm/ *noun* a serious condition caused by a staphylococcus infection of the skin or soft tissue. Its symptoms include vomiting, high fever, faintness, muscle aches, a rash and confusion. Abbreviation **TSS**

**toxin** /'tɒksɪn/ *noun* a poisonous substance produced in the body by microorganisms, and which, if injected into an animal, stimulates the production of antitoxins

**toxo-** /tɒksəʊ/ *prefix* referring to poison

**toxocariasis** /,tɒksəkə'raɪəsɪs/ *noun* the infestation of the intestine with worms from a dog or cat. Also called **visceral larva migrans**

**toxoid** /'tɒksɔɪd/ *noun* a toxin which has been treated and is no longer poisonous, but which can still provoke the formation of antibodies. Toxoids are used as vaccines, and are injected into a patient to give immunity against specific diseases.

**toxoplasmosis** /,tɒksəʊplæz'məʊsɪs/ *noun* a disease caused by the parasite *Toxoplasma* which is carried by animals. Toxoplasmosis can cause encephalitis or hydrocephalus and can be fatal.

**TPA** *abbreviation* tissue plasminogen activator

**trabecula** /trə'bekjʊlə/ *noun* a thin strip of stiff tissue which divides an organ or bone tissue into sections (NOTE: The plural is **trabeculae**.)

**trabeculectomy** /trə'bekjʊ'lektəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to treat glaucoma by cutting a channel through trabeculae to link with Schlemm's canal

**trace** /treɪs/ *noun* a very small amount ○ *There are traces of the drug in the blood sample.* ○ *The doctor found traces of alcohol in the patient's urine.* ■ *verb* to find someone or something that you are looking for

**trace element** /'treɪs ,elɪmənt/ *noun* a substance which is essential to the human body, but only in very small quantities

COMMENT: The trace elements are cobalt, chromium, copper, magnesium, manganese, molybdenum, selenium and zinc.

**tracer** /'treɪsə/ *noun* a substance, often a radioactive one, injected into a substance in the body, so that doctors can follow its passage round the body

**trache-** /treɪki/ *prefix* same as **tracheo-** (NOTE: used before vowels)

**trachea** /trə'ki:ə/ *noun* the main air passage which runs from the larynx to the lungs, where it divides into the two main bronchi. It is about 10 cm long, and is formed of rings of cartilage and connective tissue. See illustration at **LUNGS** in Supplement. Also called **windpipe**

**tracheal** /trə'ki:əl/ *adjective* referring to the trachea

**tracheal tugging** /trə'ki:əl 'tʌŋŋ/ *noun* the feeling that something is pulling on the windpipe

when the person breathes in, a symptom of aneurysm

**tracheitis** /,treɪki'aɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the trachea due to an infection

**trachelorrhaphy** /,treɪki'lɒrəfi/ *noun* a surgical operation to repair tears in the cervix of the uterus

**tracheo-** /treɪkiəʊ/ *prefix* relating to the trachea

**tracheobronchitis** /,treɪkiəʊbrɒŋ'kaɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of both the trachea and the bronchi

**tracheostomy** /,treɪki'nɒstəmi/, **tracheotomy** /,treɪki'nɒtəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to make a hole through the throat into the windpipe, so as to allow air to get to the lungs in cases where the trachea is blocked, as in pneumonia, poliomyelitis or diphtheria

**tract** /trækt/ *noun* a series of organs or tubes which allow something to pass from one part of the body to another

**traction** /'trækʃən/ *noun* a procedure that consists of using a pulling force to straighten a broken or deformed limb ○ *The patient was in traction for two weeks.*

**tragus** /'treɪɡəs/ *noun* a piece of cartilage in the outer ear which projects forward over the entrance to the auditory canal

**trait** /treɪt/ *noun* **1.** a typical characteristic of someone **2.** a genetically controlled characteristic

**trance** /trɑːns/ *noun* a condition in which a person is in a dream, but not asleep, and seems not to be aware of what is happening round him or her ○ *a hypnotic trance*

**tranexamic acid** /,trænek,sæmɪk 'æsɪd/ *noun* a drug used to control severe bleeding

**tranquilliser** /'træŋkwɪlaɪzə/, **tranquillizer**, **tranquillising drug** /'træŋkwɪlaɪzɪŋ drʌg/ *noun* an antipsychotic, anxiolytic or hypnotic drug which relieves someone's anxiety and calms him or her down (*informal*) ○ *She's taking tranquillisers to calm her nerves.* ○ *He's been on tranquillisers ever since he started his new job.*

**trans-** /trænz/ *prefix* through or across

**transaminase** /træn'sæmɪneɪz/ *noun* an enzyme involved in the transamination of amino acids

**transcendental meditation** /,trænsendənt(ə)l ,medɪ'teɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a type of meditation in which the same words or sounds are repeated silently

**transcription** /træn'skrɪpʃən/ *noun* **1.** the act of copying something written, or of putting something spoken into written form **2.** the first step in carrying out genetic instructions in living cells, in which the genetic code is transferred from DNA to molecules of messenger RNA, which then direct protein manufacture

**transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation** /,trænskjuːteɪniəs ɪ,lektɪk(ə)l 'nɜːv stɪmjʊ,leɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* full form of **TENS**

**transdermal** /trænz'dɜːm(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to a drug which is released through the skin

**transference** /'trænsf(ə)rəns/ *noun* (*in psychiatry*) a condition in which someone transfers to the psychoanalyst the characteristics belonging to a strong character from his or her past such as a parent, and reacts as if the analyst were that person

**transferrin** /træns'ferɪn/ *noun* a substance found in the blood, which carries iron in the bloodstream. Also called **siderophilin**

**transfer RNA** /,trænsfɜː ,ɑːr en 'eɪ/ *noun* RNA which attaches amino acids to protein chains being made at ribosomes

**transfusion** /træns'fjuːʒ(ə)n/ *noun* the procedure of transferring blood or saline fluids from a container into a someone's bloodstream

**transient** /'trænzɪənt/ *adjective* not lasting long

**transient ischaemic attack** /,trænzɪənt ɪ 'skiːmɪk ə,tæk/ *noun* a mild stroke caused by a brief stoppage of blood supply to the brain. Abbreviation **TIA**

**transillumination** /,trænsɪ,ljuːmɪ'neɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* an examination of an organ by shining a bright light through it

**transitional epithelium** /træn,zɪʃ(ə)nəl epi 'θiːliəm/ *noun* a type of epithelium found in the urethra

**translation** /træns'leɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* **1.** the act of putting something written or spoken in one language into words of a different language **2.** the process by which information in messenger RNA controls the sequence of amino acids assembled by a ribosome during protein synthesis

**translocation** /,trænsləʊ'keɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the movement of part of a chromosome to another part of the same chromosome or to a different chromosome pair, leading to genetic disorders

**translucent** /træns'luːs(ə)nt/ *adjective* allowing light to pass through, but not enough to allow objects on the other side to be clearly distinguished

**transmission-based precautions** /træns ,mɪʃ(ə)n beɪst prɪ'kɔːʃ(ə)nz/ *plural noun* the most recent set of guidelines for health care workers on dealing with highly infectious diseases, to be used in addition to the Standard Precautions. There are three categories: Airborne Precautions, Droplet Precautions and Contact Precautions, sometimes used in combination for diseases which can be transmitted in various ways.

**transplacental** /,trænsplə'sent(ə)l/ *adjective* through the placenta

**transplant** *noun* /'trænsplɑːnt/ **1.** a procedure which involves taking an organ such as the heart

or kidney, or tissue such as skin, and grafting it into someone to replace an organ or tissue which is diseased or not functioning properly ○ *She had a heart-lung transplant.* **2.** the organ or tissue which is grafted ○ *The kidney transplant was rejected.* ■ *verb* /træns'plɑ:nt/ to graft an organ or tissue onto or into someone to replace an organ or tissue which is diseased or not functioning correctly

**transplantation** /,trænsplɑ:n'teɪf(ə)n/ *noun* the act of transplanting something

**transposition** /,trænspə'zɪf(ə)n/ *noun* a congenital condition where the aorta and pulmonary artery are placed on the opposite side of the body to their usual position

**transpyloric plane** /,trænspaɪlə'ri:k 'pleɪn/ *noun* a plane at right angles to the sagittal plane, passing midway between the suprasternal notch and the symphysis pubis. See illustration at **ANATOMICAL TERMS** in Supplement

**transsexual** /trænz'sekʃuəl/ *adjective* feeling uncomfortable with the birth gender ■ *noun* a person, especially a man, who feels uncomfortable with their birth gender

**transsexualism** /trænz'sekʃuəlɪz(ə)m/ *noun* a condition in which a person, especially a man, feels uncomfortable with their birth gender

**transtubercular plane** /,trænstju,bɜ:kjələ 'pleɪn/ *noun* an imaginary horizontal line drawn across the lower abdomen at the level of the projecting parts of the iliac bones. See illustration at **ANATOMICAL TERMS** in Supplement. Also called **intertubercular plane**

**transudate** /'trænsju:deɪt/ *noun* a fluid which passes through the pores of a membrane. It contains less protein or solid material than an exudate.

**transudation** /,trænsju:'deɪf(ə)n/ *noun* the process of passing a fluid from the body's cells through the pores of a membrane

**transuretero-ureterostomy** /træns ,jʊri:tərəʊ ,jʊri:tə'rɒstəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation in which both ureters are brought to the same side in the abdomen, because one is damaged or obstructed

**transurethral** /,trænsjʊ:'ri:θrəl/ *adjective* through the urethra

**transurethral prostatectomy** /,trænsjʊri:θrəl ,prɒstə'tektəmi/, **transurethral resection** /,trænsjʊri:θrəl rɪ'sekʃən/ *noun* a surgical operation to remove the prostate gland, where the operation is carried out through the urethra. Abbreviation **TUR**. Also called **resection of the prostate**

**transvaginal** /,trænsvə'dʒaɪn(ə)l/ *adjective* across or through the vagina

**transverse** /trænz'vɜ:s/ *adjective* across, at right angles to an organ

**transverse arch** /,trænz'vɜ:s ɑ:tʃ/ *noun* same as **metatarsal arch**

**transverse colon** /,trænzvɜ:s 'kəʊlɒn/ *noun* the second section of the colon which crosses the body below the stomach. See illustration at **DIGESTIVE SYSTEM** in Supplement

**transverse fracture** /,trænzvɜ:s 'fræktʃə/ *noun* a fracture where the bone is broken straight across

**transverse lie** /,trænzvɜ:s 'laɪ/ *noun* the position of a fetus across the body of the mother

**transverse plane** /,trænzvɜ:s 'pleɪn/ *noun* a plane at right angles to the sagittal plane, running horizontally across the body. See illustration at **ANATOMICAL TERMS** in Supplement

**transverse presentation** /,trænzvɜ:s ,prez(ə)n'teɪf(ə)n/ *noun* a position of the baby in the uterus, where the baby's side will appear first, usually requiring urgent manipulation or caesarean section to prevent complications

**transverse process** /,trænzvɜ:s 'prəʊses/ *noun* the part of a vertebra which protrudes at the side

**transvesical prostatectomy** /træns ,vesɪk(ə)l ,prɒstə'tektəmi/ *noun* an operation to remove the prostate gland, carried out through the bladder

**transvestism** /trænz'vestɪz(ə)m/ *noun* the condition of liking to dress and behave as a member of the opposite sex

**transvestite** /trænz'vestəɪt/ *noun* a person who dresses and behaves as a member of the opposite sex

**trapezium** /trə'pi:ziəm/ *noun* one of the eight small carpal bones in the wrist, below the thumb. See illustration at **HAND** in Supplement. (NOTE: The plural is **trapeziums** or **trapezia**.)

**trapezius** /trə'pi:ziəs/ *noun* a triangular muscle in the upper part of the back and the neck, which moves the shoulder blade and pulls the head back

**trapezoid** /'træpɪzɔɪd/, **trapezoid bone** /'træpɪzɔɪd bəʊn/ *noun* one of the eight small carpal bones in the wrist, below the first finger. See illustration at **HAND** in Supplement

**trauma** /'trɔ:mə/ *noun* a wound or injury

**traumatic** /trɔ:'mætɪk/ *adjective* **1.** caused by an injury **2.** extremely frightening, distressing or shocking

**traumatic fever** /trɔ:,mætɪk 'fi:vəl/ *noun* a fever caused by an injury

**traumatic pneumothorax** /trɔ:,mætɪk ,nju:məʊ'θɔ:ræks/ *noun* pneumothorax which results from damage to the lung surface or to the wall of the chest, allowing air to leak into the space between the pleurae

**traveller's diarrhoea** /,træv(ə)ləz ,daɪə'ri:ə/ *noun* diarrhoea that affects people who travel to foreign countries and which is due to contact with

a different type of *E. coli* from the one they are used to. (*informal*)

**travel sickness** /'træv(ə)l ,sɪknəs/ *noun* same as **motion sickness**

**trazodone** /'træzədəʊn/ *noun* an antidepressant drug which has a strong sedative effect, used in the treatment of depressive disorders accompanied by insomnia

**Treacher Collins syndrome** /,tri:tʃə 'kɒlɪnz ,sɪndrəʊm/ *noun* a hereditary disorder in which the lower jaw, the cheek bones, and the ear are not fully developed

**treat** /tri:t/ *verb* to use medical methods to cure a disease or help a sick or injured person to recover ○ *She has been treated with a new antibiotic.* ○ *She's being treated by a specialist for heart disease.*

**treatment** /'tri:tmənt/ *noun* **1.** actions taken to look after sick or injured people or to cure disease ○ *He is receiving treatment for a slipped disc.* **2.** a particular way of looking after a sick or injured person or trying to cure a disease ○ *cortisone treatment* ○ *This is a new treatment for heart disease.*

**tremens** /'tri:menz/ ▶ **delirium tremens**

**tremor** /'tremə/ *noun* slight involuntary movements of a limb or muscle

**trench foot** /,trentʃ 'fʊt/ *noun* a condition, caused by exposure to cold and damp, in which the skin of the foot becomes red and blistered and in severe cases turns black when gangrene sets in. Also called **immersion foot** (NOTE: Trench foot was common among soldiers serving in the trenches during the First World War.)

**Trendelenburg's operation** /tren 'delənbɜ:gz ɒpə'reɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* an operation to tie a saphenous vein in the groin before removing varicose veins [After Friedrich Trendelenburg (1844–1924), German surgeon.]

**Trendelenburg's position** /tren 'delənbɜ:gz pə,zɪʃ(ə)n/, **Trendelenburg position** /tren 'delənbɜ:g pə,zɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a position in which someone lies on a sloping bed, with the head lower than the feet, and the knees bent. It is used in surgical operations to the pelvis and for people who have shock.

**Trendelenburg's sign** /tren 'delənbɜ:gz saɪn/ *noun* a symptom of congenital dislocation of the hip, where the person's pelvis is lower on the opposite side to the dislocation

**trephine** /tri'fi:n/ *noun* a surgical instrument for making a round hole in the skull or for removing a round piece of tissue

**TRH** *abbreviation* thyrotrophin-releasing hormone

**triage** /'tri:ɑ:ʒ/ *noun* the system in which a doctor or nurse sees patients briefly in order to decide who should be treated first

**trial** /'traɪəl/ *noun* a process of testing something such as a drug or treatment to see how effective it is, especially before allowing it to be used generally ○ *clinical trials* ○ *a six-month trial period* ○ *We're supplying it on a trial basis.* ■ *verb* to test something as part of a trial

**triamcinolone** /,traɪæm'sɪnələʊn/ *noun* a synthetic corticosteroid drug used in the treatment of skin, mouth and joint inflammations

**triangular bandage** /traɪ,æŋɡjələ 'bændɪdʒ/ *noun* a bandage made of a triangle of cloth, used to make a sling for the arm

**triceps** /'traɪseps/ *noun* a muscle formed of three parts, which are joined to form one tendon

**trich-** /trɪk/ *prefix* same as **tricho-** (*used before vowels*)

**trichiasis** /tri'kaɪəsɪs/ *noun* a painful condition in which the eyelashes grow in towards the eye and scratch the eyeball

**trichinosis** /,trɪkɪ'nəʊsɪs/, **trichiniasis** /,trɪkɪ'nəɪəsɪs/ *noun* a disease caused by infestation of the intestine by larvae of roundworms or nematodes, which pass round the body in the bloodstream and settle in muscles

**tricho-** /trɪkəʊ/ *prefix* referring to hair

**trichology** /tri'kɒlədʒi/ *noun* the study of hair and the diseases which affect it

**Trichomonas** /,trɪkə'məʊnəs/ *noun* a species of long thin parasite which infests the intestines

**Trichomonas vaginalis** /trɪkə,məʊnəs vædʒɪ'neɪlɪs/ *noun* a parasite which infests the vagina and causes an irritating discharge

**trichomoniasis** /,trɪkəʊmə'nəɪəsɪs/ *noun* infestation of the intestine or vagina with *Trichomonas*

**Trichophyton** /traɪ'kɒfɪtən/ *noun* a fungus which affects the skin, hair and nails

**trichophytosis** /,trɪkəʊfaɪ'təʊsɪs/ *noun* an infection caused by *Trichophyton*

**trichosis** /traɪ'kəʊsɪs/ *noun* any unusual condition of the hair

**trichromatism** /traɪ'krəʊmətɪz(ə)m/ *noun* vision which allows the difference between the three primary colours to be seen. Compare **dichromatism**, **monochromatism**

**tricuspid** /traɪ'kʌspɪd/ *noun* something which has three cusps, e.g. a tooth or leaf ■ **adjective 1.** having three cusps or points **2.** referring to a tricuspid valve or tooth

**tricuspid valve** /traɪ'kʌspɪd vælv/ *noun* an inlet valve with three cusps between the right atrium and the right ventricle in the heart. See illustration at **HEART** in Supplement

**tricyclic antidepressant** /traɪ,sæɪklɪk ,æntɪdɪ'pres(ə)nt/, **tricyclic antidepressant drug** /traɪ,sæɪklɪk ,æntɪdɪ'pres(ə)nt ,drʌg/ *noun* a drug used to treat depression and panic disorder, e.g. amitriptyline and nortriptyline

**tridactyly** /traɪ'dæktɪli/ *noun* the condition of having only three fingers or toes

**trifocal lenses** /traɪ,fəʊk(ə)l 'lenzɪz/, **trifocal glasses** /traɪ,fəʊk(ə)l 'glɑ:sɪz/, **trifocals** /traɪ 'fəʊk(ə)l/ *plural noun* spectacles which have three lenses combined in one piece of glass to give clear vision over different distances. ♯ **bifocal**

**trigeminal** /traɪ'dʒemɪn(ə)l/ *adjective* in three parts

**trigeminal nerve** /traɪ'dʒemɪn(ə)l nɜ:v/ *noun* the fifth cranial nerve, formed of the ophthalmic nerve, the maxillary nerve and the mandibular nerve, which controls the sensory nerves in the forehead, face and chin, and the muscles in the jaw

**trigeminal neuralgia** /traɪ,dʒemɪn(ə)l nju 'rældʒə/ *noun* a disorder of the trigeminal nerve, which sends intense pains shooting across the face. Also called **tic douloureux**

**trigeminy** /traɪ'dʒemɪni/ *noun* an irregular heartbeat, where a regular beat is followed by two ectopic beats

**trigger finger** /'trɪgə ˌfɪŋgə/ *noun* a condition in which a finger can bend but is difficult to straighten, probably because of a nodule on the flexor tendon

**triglyceride** /traɪ'glɪsəraɪd/ *noun* a substance such as fat which contains three fatty acids

**trigonitis** /ˌtrɪgə'naɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the bottom part of the wall of the bladder

**trigonocephalic** /traɪ,ɡɒnəkə'fæɪlɪk/ *adjective* referring to a skull which shows signs of trigonocephaly

**trigonocephaly** /traɪ,ɡɒnəkə'kef(ə)li/ *noun* a condition in which the skull is in the shape of a triangle, with points on either side of the face in front of the ears

**triiodothyronine** /traɪ,aɪəðəʊ'θaɪrəni:n/ *noun* a hormone synthesised in the body from thyroxine secreted by the thyroid gland

**trimeprazine** /traɪ'meprəzi:n/ *noun* an anti-histamine used to relieve the itching caused by eczema and various skin rashes, including allergic skin rashes caused by poison ivy

**trimester** /traɪ'mestə/ *noun* one of the three 3-month periods of a pregnancy

**trimethoprim** /traɪ'mi:θəprɪm/ *noun* a synthetic drug used in the treatment of malaria

**triple marker test** /ˌtrɪp(ə)l 'mɑ:kə test/ *noun* a blood test performed on pregnant women which can detect Down's syndrome in a fetus by analysing the relative levels of substances produced by the mother's placenta and the fetus itself

**triplet** /'trɪplət/ *noun* one of three babies born to a mother at the same time

**triple vaccine** /ˌtrɪp(ə)l 'væksɪ:n/ *noun* a vaccine which induces protection against three dis-

eases e.g. diphtheria, tetanus and whooping cough

**triquetrum** /traɪ'kwetrəm/, **triquetral** /traɪ 'kwetr(ə)l/, **triquetral bone** /traɪ'kwetr(ə)l bəʊn/ *noun* one of the eight small carpal bones in the wrist. See illustration at **HAND** in Supplement

**trismus** /'trɪzməs/ *noun* a spasm in the lower jaw, which makes it difficult to open the mouth, a symptom of tetanus

**trisomy** /'traɪsəʊmi/ *noun* a condition in which someone has three chromosomes instead of a pair

**trisomy 21** /ˌtraɪsəʊmi ˌtwenti 'waɪn/ *noun* same as **Down's syndrome**

**trocar** /'trəʊkɑ:/ *noun* a surgical instrument or pointed rod which slides inside a cannula to make a hole in tissue to drain off fluid

**trochanter** /trə'kæntə/ *noun* two bony lumps on either side of the top end of the femur where muscles are attached

**trochlea** /'trɒkliə/ *noun* any part of the body shaped like a pulley, especially part of the lower end of the humerus, which articulates with the ulna, or a curved bone in the frontal bone through which one of the eye muscles passes (NOTE: The plural is **trochleae**.)

**trochlear** /'trɒkliə/ *adjective* referring to a ring in a bone

**trochlear nerve** /'trɒkliə nɜ:v/ *noun* the fourth cranial nerve which controls the muscles of the eyeball

**trochoid joint** /'trəʊkɔɪd dʒɔɪnt/ *noun* a joint where a bone can rotate freely about a central axis as in the neck, where the atlas articulates with the axis. Also called **pivot joint**

**troph-** /trɒf/ *prefix* same as **tropho-** (used before vowels)

**trophic** /'trɒfɪk/ *adjective* relating to food and nutrition

**trophic ulcer** /ˌtrɒfɪk 'ʌlsə/ *noun* an ulcer caused by lack of blood, e.g. a bedsore

**tropho-** /trɒfəʊ/ *prefix* referring to food or nutrition

**-troph** /trɒfi/ *suffix* **1.** nourishment **2.** referring to the development of an organ

**tropia** /'trəʊpiə/ *noun* same as **squint**

**-tropic** /trɒpɪk/ *suffix* **1.** turning towards **2.** referring to something which influences

**tropical** /'trɒpɪk(ə)l/ *adjective* located in or coming from areas around the equator where the climate is generally very hot and humid

**tropical disease** /ˌtrɒpɪk(ə)l dɪ'zi:z/ *noun* a disease which is found in tropical countries, e.g. malaria, dengue or Lassa fever

**tropical medicine** /ˌtrɒpɪk(ə)l 'med(ə)sn/ *noun* a branch of medicine which deals with tropical diseases

**tropical ulcer** /ˌtrɒpɪk(ə)l 'ʌlsə/ *noun* a large area of infection which forms around a wound,

found especially in tropical countries. Also called **Naga sore**

**trots** /trɒts/ □ **the trots** an attack of diarrhoea (*informal*)

**trouble** /ˈtrʌb(ə)l/ *noun* a disorder or condition (*informal*) ○ *treatment for back trouble* ○ *She has kidney trouble.*

**Trousseau's sign** /ˈtruːsəʊz saɪn/ *noun* a spasm in the muscles in the forearm when a tourniquet is applied to the upper arm, which causes the index and middle fingers to extend. It is a sign of latent tetany, showing that the blood contains too little calcium. [After Armand Trousseau (1801–67), French physician.]

**true vocal cords** /ˌtruː ˈvəʊk(ə)l ˌkɔːdz/ *plural noun* the cords in the larynx which can be brought together to make sounds as air passes between them

**trunk** /trʌŋk/ *noun* same as **torso**

**truss** /trʌs/ *noun* a belt worn round the waist, with pads, to hold a hernia in place

**trust status** /ˈtrʌst ˌsteɪtəs/ *noun* the position of a hospital which is a self-governing trust

**trypanosome** /ˈtrɪpənəʊsəʊm/ *noun* a microscopic organism which lives as a parasite in human blood. It is transmitted by the bite of insects such as the tsetse fly and causes sleeping sickness and other serious illnesses.

**trypsin** /ˈtrɪpsɪn/ *noun* an enzyme converted from trypsinogen by the duodenum and secreted into the digestive system where it absorbs protein

**trypsinogen** /ˈtrɪpˈsɪnədʒən/ *noun* an enzyme secreted by the pancreas into the duodenum

**tryptophan** /ˈtrɪptəfæn/ *noun* an essential amino acid

**tsetse fly** /ˈtetsi flɑɪ, ˈsetsi flɑɪ/ *noun* an African insect which passes trypanosomes into the human bloodstream, causing sleeping sickness

**TSH** *abbreviation* thyroid-stimulating hormone

**TSS** *abbreviation* toxic shock syndrome

**tubal** /ˈtjuːb(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to a tube

**tubal ligation** /ˌtjuːb(ə)l laɪˈɡeɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a surgical operation to tie up the Fallopian tubes as a sterilisation procedure

**tubal occlusion** /ˌtjuːb(ə)l əˈkluːʒ(ə)n/ *noun* a condition in which the Fallopian tubes are blocked, either as a result of disease or surgery

**tubal pregnancy** /ˌtjuːb(ə)l ˈpregnənsi/ *noun* the most common form of ectopic pregnancy, in which the fetus develops in a Fallopian tube instead of the uterus

**tube** /tjuːb/ *noun* **1.** a long hollow passage in the body **2.** a soft flexible pipe for carrying liquid or gas **3.** a soft plastic or metal pipe, sealed at one end and with a lid at the other, used to dispense a paste or gel

**tube feeding** /ˈtjuːb ˌfiːdɪŋ/ *noun* the process of giving someone nutrients through a tube directly into their stomach or small intestine

**tuber** /ˈtjuːbə/ *noun* a swollen or raised area

**tubercle** /ˈtjuːbək(ə)l/ *noun* **1.** a small bony projection, e.g. on a rib **2.** a small infected lump characteristic of tuberculosis, where tissue is destroyed and pus forms

**tubercular** /tjuːˈbɜːkjələ/ *adjective* causing or referring to tuberculosis

**tuberculin** /tjuːˈbɜːkjʊlɪn/ *noun* a substance which is derived from the culture of the tuberculosis bacillus and is used to test people for the presence of tuberculosis

**tuberculin test** /tjuːˈbɜːkjʊlɪn test/ *noun* a test to see if someone has tuberculosis, in which someone is exposed to tuberculin and the reaction of the skin is noted

**tuberculosis** /tjuːˈbɜːkjʊˈleʊsɪs/ *noun* an infectious disease caused by the tuberculosis bacillus, where infected lumps form in the tissue. *Abbreviation TB*

**tuberculous** /tjuːˈbɜːkjʊləs/ *adjective* referring to tuberculosis

**tuberose sclerosis** /tjuːˈbərəʊs skləˈrəʊsɪs/ *noun* same as **epiloia**

**tuberosity** /ˌtjuːbəˈrɒsɪti/ *noun* a large lump on a bone

**tuberous** /ˈtjuːbəərəs/ *adjective* with lumps or nodules

**tubo-** /tjuːbəʊ/ *prefix* referring to a Fallopian tube or to the internal or external auditory meatus

**tuboabdominal** /ˌtjuːbəʊæbˈdɒmɪn(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to a Fallopian tube and the abdomen

**tubocurarine** /ˌtjuːbəʊˈkjʊərəriːn/ *noun* a toxic alkaloid which is the active constituent of curare, used as a muscle relaxant

**tubo-ovarian** /tjuːbəʊ əʊˈvɛəriən/ *adjective* referring to a Fallopian tube and an ovary

**tubotympanal** /ˌtjuːbəʊˈtɪmpən(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to the Eustachian tube and the tympanum

**tubular** /ˈtjuːbjʊlə/ *adjective* shaped like a tube

**tubular bandage** /ˌtjuːbjʊlə ˈbændɪdʒ/ *noun* a bandage made of a tube of elastic cloth

**tubular reabsorption** /ˌtjuːbjʊlə ˌrɪːəb ˈsɔːpʃən/ *noun* the process by which some of the substances filtered into the kidney are absorbed back into the bloodstream by the tubules

**tubule** /ˈtjuːbjʊːl/ *noun* a small tube in the body. ◊ **renal tubule**

**tumefaction** /ˌtjuːmɪˈfækʃən/ *noun* swelling within body tissue, usually caused a build-up of blood or water

**tumescence** /tjuːˈmes(ə)ns/ *noun* swollen tissue where liquid has accumulated underneath. ◊ **oedema**

**tumid** /'tju:mɪd/ *adjective* swollen

**tummy** /'tʌmi/ *noun* stomach or abdomen (*informal*)

**tummy ache** /'tʌmi eɪk/ *noun* stomach pain (*informal*)

**tumoral** /'tju:mərəl/, **tumorous** /'tju:mərəs/ *adjective* referring to a tumour

**tumour** /'tju:mə/ *noun* an unusual swelling or growth of new cells ○ *The X-ray showed a tumour in the breast.* ○ *a brain tumour.* (NOTE: For other terms referring to tumours, see words beginning with **onco-**.)

**tunica** /'tju:nɪkə/ *noun* a layer of tissue which covers an organ

**tunica albuginea testis** /,tju:nɪkə ælbjuːˌdʒɪniə 'testɪs/ *noun* a white fibrous membrane covering the testes and the ovaries

**tunica intima** /,tju:nɪkə 'ɪntɪmə/ *noun* the inner layer of the wall of an artery or vein. Also called **intima**

**tunica media** /,tju:nɪkə 'mi:diə/ *noun* the middle layer of the wall of an artery or vein. Also called **media**

**tunica vaginalis** /,tju:nɪkə ˌvædʒɪ'neɪlɪs/ *noun* a membrane covering the testes and epididymis

**tuning fork** /'tju:nɪŋ fɔ:k/ *noun* a metal fork which, if hit, gives out a perfect note, used in hearing tests such as Rinne's test

**tunnel** /'tʌn(ə)l/ *noun* a passage or channel through or under something ○ *the carpal tunnel*  
 ■ *verb* **1.** to make a tunnel under or through something **2.** to produce or dig something which is shaped like a tunnel

**tunnel vision** /,tʌn(ə)l 'vɪʒ(ə)n/ *noun* vision which is restricted to the area directly in front of the eye

**turbinate** /'tɜ:bɪnət/ *adjective* **1.** having a shape like a spiral or an inverted cone **2.** referring to any of the three bones found on the walls of the nasal passages of mammals

**turbinate bone** /'tɜ:bɪnət bæʊn/ *noun* ▶ **nasal conchae**

**turbineotomy** /,tɜ:brɪ'nektəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to remove a turbinate bone

**turgescence** /tɜ:'dʒes(ə)ns/ *noun* a swelling in body tissue caused by the accumulation of fluid

**turgid** /'tɜ:dʒɪd/ *adjective* swollen with blood

**turgor** /'tɜ:gə/ *noun* the condition of being swollen

**Turner's syndrome** /'tɜ:nəz ˌsɪndrəʊm/ *noun* a congenital condition in females, caused by the absence of one of the pair of X chromosomes, in which sexual development is retarded and no ovaries develop [Described 1938. After Henry Hubert Turner (1892–1970), US endocrinologist, Clinical professor of Medicine, Oklahoma University, USA.]

**turriccephaly** /,tʌrɪ'sefəli/ same as **oxycephaly**

**tussis** /'tʌsɪs/ *noun* coughing

**twenty-twenty vision** /,twenti ˌtwenti 'vɪʒ(ə)n/ *noun* perfect vision

**twilight sleep** /'twɑɪlaɪt ˌsli:p/ *noun* a type of anaesthetic sleep, in which the patient is semi-conscious but cannot feel any pain

**twilight state** /'twɑɪlaɪt steɪt/ *noun* a condition of epileptics and alcoholics in which the person can do some automatic actions, but is not conscious of what he or she is doing  
 COMMENT: Twilight state is induced at childbirth, by introducing anaesthetics into the rectum.

**twin** /tʍɪn/ *noun* one of two babies born to a mother at the same time

**tylosis** /taɪ'ləʊsɪs/ *noun* the development of a callus

**tympan-** /tɪmpən/ *prefix* same as **tympano-** (NOTE: used before vowels)

**tympanectomy** /,tɪmpə'nektəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to remove the tympanic membrane

**tympanic** /tɪm'pæɪnɪk/ *adjective* referring to the eardrum

**tympanic membrane** /tɪm,pæɪnɪk 'membreɪn/ *noun* the membrane at the inner end of the external auditory meatus leading from the outer ear, which vibrates with sound and passes the vibrations on to the ossicles in the middle ear. Also called **tympanum**, **eardrum**. See illustration at **EAR** in Supplement

**tympanites** /,tɪmpə'nartɪ:z/ *noun* the expansion of the stomach with gas. Also called **meteorism**

**tympanitis** /,tɪmpə'nartɪs/ *noun* same as **otitis media**

**tympano-** /tɪmpənəʊ/ *prefix* referring to the eardrum

**tympanoplasty** /'tɪmpənəʊplæsti/ *noun* same as **myringoplasty**

**tympanosclerosis** /,tɪmpənəʊsklə'rəʊsɪs/ *noun* irreversible damage to the tympanic membrane and middle ear, starting with the replacement of tissues or fibrin by collagen and hyalin. Then calcification occurs, leading to deafness.

**tympanotomy** /,tɪmpə'nɒtəmi/ *noun* same as **myringotomy**

**tympanum** /'tɪmpənəm/ *noun* same as **tympanic membrane**

**type A behaviour** /,taɪp 'eɪ bɪ,heɪvjə/ *noun* a behaviour pattern which may contribute to coronary heart disease, in which an individual is aggressive and over-competitive, and usually lives at a stressful pace. Compare **type B behaviour**

**type B behaviour** /,taɪp 'bi: bɪ,heɪvjə/ *noun* a behaviour pattern which is unlikely to contribute to coronary heart disease, in which an individual is patient, tolerant, not very competitive and lives at a more relaxed pace. Compare **type A behaviour**

**Type I diabetes mellitus** /,taɪp ,wʌn daɪə ,bi:tɪz mə'laɪtəs/ *noun* the type of diabetes mellitus in which the beta cells of the pancreas produce little or no insulin, and the person is completely dependent on injections of insulin for survival. It is more likely to develop in people under 30. Symptoms are usually severe and occur suddenly. Also called **insulin-dependent diabetes**

**Type II diabetes mellitus** /,taɪp ,tu: daɪə ,bi:tɪz mə'laɪtəs/ *noun* the type of diabetes mellitus in which cells throughout the body lose some or most of their ability to use insulin. It is more likely to develop in people who are over 40, who are overweight or obese, and who do not exercise regularly. It can be controlled in some cases with diet and exercise, but more severe cases may need oral medication which reduces glucose concen-

trations in the blood, or insulin injections, so that even cells with a poor uptake will capture enough insulin. Also called **non-insulin-dependent diabetes**

**typho-** /taɪfəʊ/ *prefix* **1.** relating to typhoid fever **2.** relating to typhus

**typhoid** /'taɪfɔɪd/, **typhoid fever** /,taɪfɔɪd 'fi:vəl/ *noun* an infection of the intestine caused by *Salmonella typhi* in food and water

**typhus** /'taɪfəs/ *noun* one of several fevers caused by the Rickettsia bacterium, transmitted by fleas and lice, producing a fever, extreme weakness and a dark rash on the skin. The test for typhus is the Weil-Felix reaction.

**tyramine** /'taɪrəmi:n/ *noun* an enzyme found in cheese, beans, tinned fish, red wine and yeast extract, which can cause high blood pressure if found in excessive quantities in the brain. ♀ **monoamine oxidase**

**tyrosine** /'taɪrəsi:n/ *noun* an amino acid in protein which is a component of thyroxine, and is a precursor to the catecholamines dopamine, noradrenaline and adrenaline



# U

**UKCC** *abbreviation* United Kingdom Central Council for Nursing, Midwifery and Health Visiting

**ulcer** /'ʌlsə/ *noun* an open sore in the skin or in a mucous membrane, which is inflamed and difficult to heal ○ *stomach ulcer*

**ulcerative** /'ʌls(ə)rətɪv/ *adjective* referring to ulcers, or characterised by ulcers

**ulcerative colitis** /,ʌls(ə)rətɪv kə'laɪtɪs/ *noun* severe pain in the colon, with diarrhoea and ulcers in the rectum, often with a psychosomatic cause

**ulceromembranous gingivitis** /,ʌlsərəʊ ,membɾənəs ,dʒɪndʒɪ'vaɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the gums, which can also affect the mucous membrane in the mouth

**ule-** *prefix* relating to a scar, or to scar tissue

**ulna** /'ʌlnə/ *noun* the longer and inner of the two bones in the forearm between the elbow and the wrist. See illustration at **HAND** in Supplement. Compare **radius**

**ulnar** /'ʌlnə/ *adjective* referring to the ulna

**ulnar artery** /'ʌlnər ,ɑ:təri/ *noun* an artery which branches from the brachial artery at the elbow and runs down the inside of the forearm to join the radial artery in the palm of the hand

**ulnar nerve** /'ʌlnə nɜ:v/ *noun* a nerve which runs from the neck to the elbow and controls the muscles in the forearm and some of the fingers

COMMENT: The ulnar nerve passes near the surface of the skin at the elbow, where it can easily be hit, giving the effect of the 'funny bone'.

**ultra-** *prefix* **1.** further than **2.** extremely

**ultrafiltration** /,ʌltrəfɪl'treɪf(ə)n/ *noun* the process of filtering the blood to remove tiny particles, e.g. when the blood is filtered by the kidney

**ultrasonic** /,ʌltrə'sɒnɪk/ *adjective* referring to ultrasound

**ultrasonic probe** /,ʌltrəsɒnɪk 'prəʊb/ *noun* an instrument which locates organs or tissues inside the body using ultrasound

**ultrasonics** /,ʌltrə'sɒnɪks/ *noun* the study of ultrasound and its use in medical treatments

**ultrasonic waves** /,ʌltrəsɒnɪk 'weɪvz/ *plural noun* same as **ultrasound**

**ultrasonogram** /,ʌltrə'sɒnəgræm/ *noun* a picture made with ultrasound for the purpose of medical examination or diagnosis

**ultrasonograph** /,ʌltrə'sɒnəgrɑ:f/ *noun* a machine which takes pictures of internal organs, using ultrasound

**ultrasonography** /,ʌltrəsə'nɒgrəfi/ *noun* the procedure of passing ultrasound waves through the body and recording echoes which show details of internal organs. Also called **echography**

**ultrasound** /'ʌltrəsəʊnd/ *noun* very high frequency sound waves which can be reflected off internal body parts or off a fetus in the womb to create images for medical examination (NOTE: No plural for **ultrasound**.)

**ultrasound marker** /'ʌltrəsəʊnd ,mɑ:kə/ *noun* an unusual physical characteristic seen in an ultrasound examination of a fetus which is an indication of the existence of a genetic or developmental disorder

**ultrasound probe** /'ʌltrəsəʊnd prəʊb/ *noun* same as **ultrasonic probe**

**ultrasound scanning** /'ʌltrəsəʊnd ,skæniŋ/, **ultrasound screening** /'ʌltrəsəʊnd ,skri:niŋ/ *noun* a method of gathering information about the body by taking images using high-frequency sound waves

**ultrasound treatment** /'ʌltrəsəʊnd ,tri:təmənt/ *noun* the treatment of soft tissue inflammation using ultrasound waves

**ultraviolet** /,ʌltrə'vaɪələt/ *adjective* referring to the short invisible rays beyond the violet end of the spectrum, which form the element in sunlight which tans the skin, helps the skin produce Vitamin D and kills bacteria. Abbreviation **UV**

**ultraviolet lamp** /,ʌltrə'vaɪələt 'læmp/ *noun* a lamp which gives off ultraviolet rays

**ultraviolet radiation** /,ʌltrə'vaɪələt ,reɪdɪ 'eɪf(ə)n/, **ultraviolet rays** /,ʌltrə'vaɪələt reɪs/ *noun* short invisible rays of ultraviolet light. Abbreviation **UVR**

**umbilical** /ʌm'bɪlɪk(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to the navel

**umbilical cord** /ʌm'bɪlɪk(ə)l kɔ:d/ *noun* a cord containing two arteries and one vein which links the fetus inside the uterus to the placenta

**umbilical hernia** /ʌm,bɪlɪk(ə)l 'hɜ:niə/ *noun* a hernia which bulges at the navel, usually in young children. Also called **exomphalos**

**umbilicated** /ʌm'bɪlɪkeɪtɪd/ *adjective* with a small depression, like a navel, in the centre

**umbilicus** /ʌm'bɪlɪkəs/ *noun* same as **navel**

**umbo** /'ʌmbəʊ/ *noun* a projecting part in the middle of the outer side of the eardrum

**un-** /ʌn/ *prefix* not

**unciform bone** /'ʌnsɪfɔ:m bəʊn/ *noun* one of the eight small carpal bones in the wrist, shaped like a hook. Also called **hamate bone**

**uncinate** /'ʌnsɪnət/ *adjective* shaped like a hook

**unconditioned response** /,ʌnkəndɪf(ə)nd rɪ'spɒns/ *noun* a response to a stimulus which occurs automatically, by instinct, and has not been learned

**unconscious** /ʌn'kɒnʃəs/ *adjective* not aware of what is happening ○ *She was unconscious for two days after the accident.* ■ *noun* □ **the unconscious** (in *psychology*) the part of the mind which stores feelings, memories or desires that someone cannot consciously call up. ◊ **subconscious**

**unconsciousness** /ʌn'kɒnʃənsəs/ *noun* the state of being unconscious, e.g. as a result of lack of oxygen or from some other external cause such as a blow on the head

**undecenoic acid** /ʌn,dɛsɪnəɪk 'æsɪd/, **undecylenic acid** /ʌn,dɪsɪlenɪk 'æsɪd/ *noun* a substance made from castor bean oil, used in the treatment of fungal infections such as thrush

**undine** /'ʌndi:n/ *noun* a glass container for a solution to bathe the eyes

**undulant fever** /'ʌndjələnt ,fɪ:və/ same as **brucellosis**

**ungual** /'ʌŋgwəl/ *adjective* referring to the fingernails or toenails

**unguentum** /ʌŋ'gwentəm/ *noun* (in *pharmacy*) an ointment

**unguis** /'ʌŋgwɪs/ same as **nail**

**uni-** /ju:ni/ *prefix* one

**unicellular** /,ju:ni'seljələ/ *adjective* referring to an organism formed of one cell

**unigravida** /,ju:ni'grævɪdə/ *noun* same as **primigravida**

**unilateral** /,ju:ni'læt(ə)rəl/ *adjective* affecting one side of the body only

**unilateral oophorectomy** /,ju:ni:læt(ə)rəl ,əʊfə'rektəmi/ *noun* the surgical removal of one ovary

**union** /'ju:njən/ *noun* the joining together of two parts of a fractured bone. Opposite **non-union**. ◊ **malunion**

**uniovular** /,ju:ni'ɒvjələ/ *noun* consisting of, or coming from, one ovum

**uniovular twins** /,ju:niɒvjələ 'twɪnz/ *plural noun* same as **identical twins**

**unipara** /ju:'nɪpərə/ *noun* same as **primipara**

**unipolar neurone** /ju:ni,pəʊlə 'nɜ:ərəʊn/ *noun* a neurone with a single process. Compare **multipolar neurone**, **bipolar neurone**. See illustration at **NEURONE** in Supplement

**unit** /'ju:nɪt/ *noun* **1.** a single part of a larger whole **2.** a part of a hospital that has a specialised function ○ *a burns unit* **3.** a named and agreed standard amount used for measuring something ○ *A gram is an SI unit of weight.* **4.** a quantity of a drug, enzyme, hormone or of blood, taken as a standard for measurement and producing a given effect ○ *three units of blood* ○ *a unit of insulin* **5.** a machine or device ○ *a waste-disposal unit*

**United Kingdom Central Council for Nursing, Midwifery, and Health Visiting** /ju:,nɑ:tɪd ,kɪŋdəm ,sentrəl ,kɑ:nsəl fə ,nɜ:ɪŋ mɪd,wɪfəri ənd 'helθ ,vɪzɪtɪŋ/ *noun* in the UK from 1979 until April 2002, an organisation which regulated nurses, midwives, and health visitors. The UKCC and the four National Boards have now been replaced by the Nursing and Midwifery Council. Abbreviation **UKCC**

**universal donor** /,ju:ni:vɜ:s(ə)l 'dəʊnə/ *noun* a person with blood group O, whose blood may be given to anyone

**Universal Precautions** /,ju:ni:vɜ:s(ə)l prɪ 'kɔ:ʃ(ə)nzl/ *abbreviation* UP. ◊ **Standard Precautions**

**universal recipient** /,ju:ni:vɜ:s(ə)l rɪ 'sɪpɪənt/ *noun* a person with blood group AB who can receive blood from all the other blood groups

**unsaturated fat** /ʌn,sætʃəreɪtɪd 'fæt/ *noun* fat which does not have a large amount of hydrogen, and so can be broken down more easily

**unstable angina** /ʌn,stəɪb(ə)l æn'dʒaɪnə/ *noun* angina which has suddenly become worse

**unstriated muscle** /,ʌnstraɪ,eɪtɪd 'mʌs(ə)l/ *noun* same as **smooth muscle**

**upper respiratory infection** /,ʌpə rɪ 'spɪrət(ə)rɪ ɪn,fekʃən/ *noun* an infection in the upper part of the respiratory system

**UPPP** *abbreviation* uvulopalatopharyngoplasty

**upset stomach** /ʌp,set 'stʌmək/ *noun* same as **stomach upset**

**uracil** /'jʊərəsɪl/ *noun* a pyrimidine base, one of the four bases in RNA in which it pairs with thymine

**uraemia** /'jʊ'ri:mɪə/ *noun* a disorder caused by kidney failure, where urea is retained in the blood, and the person develops nausea, convulsions and in severe cases goes into a coma

**uraemic** /'jʊ'ri:mɪk/ *adjective* referring to uraemia, or having uraemia

**uran-** /juərən/ *prefix* referring to the palate

**urate** /'juərəɪt/ *noun* a salt of uric acid found in urine

**uraturia** /,juərə'tjuəriəl/ *noun* the presence of excessive amounts of urates in the urine, e.g. in gout

**urea** /ju'ri:ə/ *noun* a substance produced in the liver from excess amino acids, and excreted by the kidneys into the urine

**uresis** /ju'ri:sɪs/ *noun* the act of passing urine

**ureter** /ju'ri:tə, 'juəri:tə/ *noun* one of the two tubes which take urine from the kidneys to the urinary bladder. See illustration at **KIDNEY** in Supplement. Also called **urinary duct**

**ureter-** /juəri:tə/ *prefix* same as **uretero-** (used before vowels)

**ureteral** /ju'ri:tərəl/ *adjective* referring to the ureters

**ureterectomy** /,juəri:tə'rektəmi/ *noun* the surgical removal of a ureter

**ureteric** /,juəri'terɪk/ *adjective* same as **ureteral**

**ureteric calculus** /,juəri'terɪk 'kælkjʊləs/ *noun* a kidney stone in the ureter

**ureteric catheter** /,juəri'terɪk 'kæθɪtəl/ *noun* a catheter passed through the ureter to the kidney, to inject an opaque solution into the kidney before taking an X-ray

**urethritis** /,juəri'tə'rɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of a ureter

**uretero-** /juəri:tərəʊ/ *prefix* referring to the ureter

**ureterocele** /ju'ri:tərəʊsi:l/ *noun* swelling in a ureter caused by narrowing of the opening where the ureter enters the bladder

**ureterocolostomy** /ju,ri:tərəʊkə'lɒstəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to implant the ureter into the sigmoid colon, so as to bypass the bladder

**ureteroenterostomy** /ju,ri:tərəʊ,entə'rɒstəmi/ *noun* an artificially formed passage between the ureter and the intestine

**ureterolith** /ju'ri:tərəʊlɪθ/ *noun* a stone in a ureter

**ureterolithotomy** /ju,ri:tərəʊlɪ'tɒtəmi/ *noun* the surgical removal of a stone from the ureter

**ureterolysis** /,juəri'tərəʊlɪsɪs/ *noun* a surgical operation to free one or both ureters from adhesions or surrounding tissue

**ureteroneocystostomy** /ju,ri:tərəʊ,ni:əʊsai'stɒstəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to transplant a ureter to a different location in the bladder

**ureteronephrectomy** /ju,ri:tərəʊni'frektəmi/ *noun* same as **nephroureterectomy**

**ureteroplasty** /ju'ri:tərəʊplæsti/ *noun* a surgical operation to repair a ureter

**ureteropyelonephritis** /ju,ri:tərəʊ,paɪələni'fraɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the

ureter and the pelvis of the kidney to which it is attached

**ureteroscopy** /ju'ri:tərəʊskəʊp/ *noun* an instrument which is passed into the ureter and up into the kidneys, usually used to locate or remove a stone

**ureteroscopy** /,juəri:tə'rɒskəpi/ *noun* an examination of the ureter with a ureteroscopy

**ureterosigmoidostomy** /ju,ri:tərəʊsɪgmɔɪ'dɒstəmi/ same as **ureterocolostomy**

**ureterostomy** /,juəri:tə'rɒstəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to make an artificial opening for the ureter into the abdominal wall, so that urine can be passed directly out of the body

**ureterotomy** /,juəri:tə'rɒtəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to make an incision into the ureter, mainly to remove a stone

**ureterovaginal** /ju,ri:tərəʊvə'dʒaɪn(ə)/ *adjective* referring to the ureter and the vagina

**urethra** /ju'ri:θrə/ *noun* a tube which takes urine from the bladder to be passed out of the body. See illustration at **UROGENITAL SYSTEM** in Supplement

**urethral** /ju'ri:θr(ə)/ *adjective* referring to the urethra

**urethral catheter** /ju,ri:θr(ə)l 'kæθɪtəl/ *noun* a catheter passed up the urethra to allow urine to flow out of the bladder, used to empty the bladder before an abdominal operation. Also called **urinary catheter**

**urethral stricture** /ju,ri:θrəl 'striktʃəl/ *noun* a condition in which the urethra is narrowed or blocked by a growth. Also called **urethrostenosis**

**urethritis** /,juərə'θrɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the urethra

**urethro-** /juəri:θərəʊ/ *prefix* referring to the urethra

**urethrocele** /ju'ri:θrəsi:l/ *noun* a swelling formed in a weak part of the wall of the urethra

**urethrogram** /ju'ri:θrəgræm/ *noun* an X-ray photograph of the urethra

**urethrography** /,juəri'θrɒgrəfi/ *noun* X-ray examination of the urethra

**urethroplasty** /ju'ri:θrəplæsti/ *noun* a surgical operation to repair a urethra

**urethrorrhaphy** /,juəri'θrɒrəfi/ *noun* a surgical operation to repair a torn urethra

**urethrorrhoea** /ju,ri:θrə'ri:ə/ *noun* the discharge of fluid from the urethra, usually associated with urethritis

**urethroscopy** /ju'ri:θrəskəʊp/ *noun* a surgical instrument, used to examine the interior of a man's urethra

**urethroscopy** /,juəri'θrɒskəpi/ *noun* an examination of the inside of a man's urethra with a urethroscopy

**urethrostenosis** /jʊ,ri:θrəʊstə'nəʊsɪs/ *noun* same as **urethral stricture**

**urethrostomy** /,jʊəri'θrɒstəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to make an opening for a man's urethra between the scrotum and the anus

**urethrotomy** /,jʊəri'θrɒtəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to open a blocked or narrowed urethra. Also called **Wheelhouse's operation**

**urge incontinence** /'ɜ:dʒ ɪn,kɒntɪnəns/ *noun* a condition in which someone feels a very strong need to urinate and cannot retain their urine

**-uria** /jʊəriə/ *suffix* **1.** a condition of the urine **2.** a disease characterised by a condition of the urine

**uric acid** /,jʊərɪk 'æsɪd/ *noun* a chemical compound which is formed from nitrogen in waste products from the body and which also forms crystals in the joints of people who have gout

**urin-** /jʊərɪn/ *prefix* same as **urino-** (used before vowels)

**urinalysis** /,jʊəri'næləsɪs/ *noun* the analysis of urine, to detect diseases such as diabetes mellitus

**urinary** /'jʊərɪn(ə)rɪ/ *adjective* referring to urine

**urinary bladder** /,jʊərɪn(ə)rɪ 'blædə/ *noun* a sac where the urine collects after passing from the kidneys through the ureters, before being passed out of the body through the urethra. See illustration at **KIDNEY, UROGENITAL SYSTEM (MALE)** in Supplement

**urinary catheter** /,jʊərɪn(ə)rɪ 'kæθɪtə/ *noun* same as **urethral catheter**

**urinary duct** /'jʊərɪn(ə)rɪ dʌkt/ *noun* same as **ureter**

**urinary incontinence** /,jʊərɪn(ə)rɪ ɪn 'kɒntɪnəns/ *noun* the involuntary emission of urine

**urinary obstruction** /,jʊərɪn(ə)rɪ əb 'strʌkʃən/ *noun* a blockage of the urethra, which prevents urine being passed

**urinary retention** /,jʊərɪn(ə)rɪ rɪ'tenʃən/ *noun* the inability to pass urine, usually because the urethra is blocked or because the prostate gland is enlarged. Also called **urine retention**

**urinary system** /,jʊərɪn(ə)rɪ 'sɪstəm/ *noun* a system of organs and ducts which separate waste liquids from the blood and excrete them as urine, including the kidneys, bladder, ureters and urethra

**urinary tract** /'jʊərɪn(ə)rɪ trækt/ *noun* the set of tubes down which the urine passes from the kidneys to the bladder and from the bladder out of the body

**urinary tract infection** /'jʊərɪn(ə)rɪ trækt ɪn 'fekʃən/ *noun* a bacterial infection of any part of the urinary system. Symptoms are usually a need to urinate frequently and pain on urination. Abbreviation **UTI**

**urinate** /'jʊərɪneɪt/ *verb* to pass urine from the body

**urination** /,jʊərɪ'neɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the passing of urine out of the body. Also called **micturition**

**urine** /'jʊərɪn/ *noun* a yellowish liquid, containing water and waste products, mainly salt and urea, which is excreted by the kidneys and passed out of the body through the ureters, bladder and urethra

**urine retention** /'jʊərɪn rɪ'tenʃ(ə)n/ *noun* same as **urinary retention**

**uriniferous tubule** /,jʊərɪ,nɪf(ə)rəs 'tju:bjuzl/ *noun* same as **renal tubule**

**urino-** /jʊərɪnəʊ/ *prefix* referring to urine

**urinogenital** /,jʊərɪnəʊ'dʒenɪt(ə)l/ *adjective* same as **urogenital**

**urinometer** /,jʊərɪ'nɒmɪtə/ *noun* an instrument which measures the specific gravity of urine

**urobilin** /,jʊərəʊ'baɪlɪn/ *noun* a yellow pigment formed when urobilinogen comes into contact with air

**urobilinogen** /,jʊərəʊbaɪ'ɪnədʒən/ *noun* a colourless pigment formed when bilirubin is reduced to stercobilinogen in the intestines

**urochrome** /'jʊərəkrəʊm/ *noun* the pigment which colours the urine yellow

**urodynamics** /,jʊərəʊdaɪ'næmɪks/ *plural noun* the active changes which occur during the function of the bladder, urethral sphincter and pelvic floor muscles

**urogenital** /,jʊərəʊ'dʒenɪt(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to the urinary and genital systems. Also called **urinogenital**

**urogenital system** /,jʊərəʊ'dʒenɪt(ə)l 'sɪstəm/ *noun* the whole of the urinary tract and reproductive system

**urogram** /'jʊərəgræm/ *noun* an X-ray picture of the urinary tract, or of a part of it

**urography** /jʊ'rɒgrəfi/ *noun* an X-ray examination of part of the urinary system after injection of radio-opaque dye

**urokinase** /,jʊərəʊ'kaɪneɪz/ *noun* an enzyme formed in the kidneys, which begins the process of breaking down blood clots

**uroolith** /'jʊərəlɪθ/ *noun* a stone in the urinary system

**urological** /,jʊərə'lɒdʒɪk(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to urology

**urologist** /jʊ'rɒlədʒɪst/ *noun* a doctor who specialises in urology

**urology** /jʊ'rɒlədʒi/ *noun* the scientific study of the urinary system and its diseases

**urostomy** /jʊ'rɒstəmi/ *noun* the surgical creation of an artificial urethra

**urticaria** /ɜ:tɪ'rkeəriə/ *noun* an allergic reaction to injections, particular foods or plants where the skin forms irritating reddish patches. Also called **hives, nettle rash**

**usual** /'ju:ʒuəl/ *adjective* expected or typical

**uter-** /ju:tə/ *prefix* same as **utero-** (*used before vowels*)

**uterine** /'ju:təraɪn/ *adjective* referring to the uterus

**uterine cavity** /,ju:təraɪn 'kævɪti/ *noun* the inside of the uterus

**uterine procidentia** /,ju:təraɪn ,prəʊsi 'denʃə/, **uterine prolapse** /,ju:təraɪn 'prəʊləps/ *noun* a condition in which part of the uterus has passed through the vagina, usually after childbirth

COMMENT: Uterine procidentia has three stages of severity: in the first the cervix descends into the vagina, in the second the cervix is outside the vagina, but part of the uterus is still inside, and in the third stage, the whole uterus passes outside the vagina.

**uterine retroflexion** /,ju:təraɪn ,retrəʊ 'flekʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a condition in which the uterus bends backwards away from its usual position

**uterine retroversion** /,ju:təraɪn retrəʊ 'vɜ:f(ə)n/ *noun* a condition in which the uterus slopes backwards away from its usual position

**utero-** /ju:təʊ/ *prefix* referring to the uterus

**uterography** /,ju:tə'rɒgrəfi/ *noun* an X-ray examination of the uterus

**uterosalpingography** /,ju:təʊsælpɪŋ 'gɒgrəfi/ *noun* same as **hysterosalpingography**

**uterovesical** /,ju:təʊ'vesɪk(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to the uterus and the bladder

**uterus** /'ju:t(ə)rəs/ *noun* the hollow organ in a woman's pelvic cavity, behind the bladder and in front of the rectum in which the embryo develops

before birth. Also called **womb**. See illustration at **UROGENITAL SYSTEM (FEMALE)** in Supplement (NOTE: For other terms referring to the uterus, see words beginning with **hyster-**, **hystero-**, **metr-**, **metro-**)

**uterus didelphys** /,ju:t(ə)rəs daɪ'delfɪs/ *noun* same as **double uterus**

**utricle** /'ju:trɪk(ə)l/, **utriculus** /ju'trɪkjʊləs/ *noun* a large sac inside the vestibule of the ear, which relates information about the upright position of the head to the brain

**UV** *abbreviation* ultraviolet

**uvea** /'ju:viə/ *noun* a layer of organs in the eye beneath the sclera, formed of the iris, the ciliary body and the choroid. Also called **uveal tract**

**uveal** /'ju:viəl/ *adjective* referring to the uvea

**uveal tract** /'ju:viəl trækt/ *noun* same as **uvea**

**uveitis** /,ju:vi'aɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of any part of the uvea

**UVR** *abbreviation* ultraviolet radiation

**uvula** /'ju:vjʊlə/ *noun* a piece of soft tissue which hangs down from the back of the soft palate

**uvular** /'ju:vjʊlə/ *adjective* referring to the uvula

**uvulectomy** /,ju:vju'lektəmi/ *noun* the surgical removal of the uvula

**uvulitis** /,ju:vju'laitɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the uvula

**uvulopalatopharyngoplasty** /,ju:vjʊləʊ ,pælətəʊfə'rɪŋgəʊplæsti/ *noun* a surgical operation to remove the uvula and other soft tissue in the palate, in order to widen the airways and treat the problem of snoring. Abbreviation **UPPP**

# V

**vaccinate** /'væksɪneɪt/ *verb* to introduce vaccine into a person's body in order to make the body create its own antibodies, so making the person immune to the disease (NOTE: You vaccinate someone **against** a disease.)

**vaccination** /,væksɪ'neɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the action of vaccinating someone

COMMENT: Originally the words **vaccination** and **vaccine** applied only to smallpox immunisation, but they are now used for immunisation against any disease. Vaccination is mainly given against cholera, diphtheria, rabies, smallpox, tuberculosis, and typhoid.

**vaccine** /'væksɪn/ *noun* a substance which contains antigens to a disease or a weak form of a disease, used to protect people against it

**vacuum** /'vækju:m/ *noun* a space which is completely empty of all matter, including air

**vacuum extraction** /'vækjuəm ɪk'strækʃən/ *noun* the procedure of pulling on the head of the baby with a suction instrument to aid birth

**vacuum extractor** /'vækjuəm ɪk'stræktə/ *noun* a surgical instrument formed of a rubber suction cup which is used in vacuum extraction during childbirth

**vacuum suction** /'vækjuəm ,sʌkʃən/ *noun* a method used to achieve an abortion, after dilatation of the cervix. Also called **aspiration**

**vagal** /'veɪg(ə)/ *adjective* referring to the vagus nerve

**vagal tone** /,veɪg(ə)l 'təʊn/ *noun* the action of the vagus nerve to slow the beat of the sinoatrial node

**vagin-** /və'dʒaɪn/ *prefix* referring to the vagina

**vagina** /və'dʒaɪnəl/ *noun* a passage in a woman's reproductive tract between the entrance to the uterus, the cervix, and the vulva, able to stretch enough to allow a baby to pass through during childbirth. See illustration at **UROGENITAL SYSTEM (FEMALE)** in Supplement (NOTE: For other terms referring to the vagina, see words beginning with **colp-**, **colpo-**.)

**vaginal bleeding** /və'dʒaɪn(ə)l 'bli:diŋ/ *noun* bleeding from the vagina

**vaginal delivery** /və,dʒaɪn(ə)l dr'ɪv(ə)rɪ/ *noun* the birth of a baby through the mother's vagina, without surgical intervention

**vaginal diaphragm** /və,dʒaɪn(ə)l 'daɪəfræm/ *noun* a circular contraceptive device for women, which is inserted into the vagina and placed over the neck of the uterus before sexual intercourse

**vaginal discharge** /və,dʒaɪn(ə)l 'dɪstʃu:dʒ/ *noun* the flow of liquid from the vagina

**vaginal douche** /və,dʒaɪn(ə)l 'du:ʃ/ *noun* 1. the process of washing out the vagina 2. a device or liquid for washing out the vagina

**vaginal examination** /və,dʒaɪn(ə)l ɪg,zæmɪ 'neɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the act of checking the vagina for signs of disease or growth

**vaginal suppository** /,vædʒɪn(ə)l sə 'pɒzɪt(ə)rɪ/ *noun* same as **pessary** 1

**vaginismus** /,vædʒɪ'nɪzməs/ *noun* a painful contraction of the vagina which prevents sexual intercourse

**vaginitis** /,vædʒɪ'naɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the vagina which is mainly caused by the bacterium *Trichomonas vaginalis* or by a fungus *Candida albicans*

**vaginoplasty** /və'dʒaɪnəplæstɪ/ *noun* a surgical operation to graft tissue on to the vagina

**vaginoscope** /'vædʒɪnəʊskəʊp/ *noun* same as **colposcope**

**vago-** /veɪgə/ *prefix* referring to the vagus nerve

**vagotomy** /veɪ'gɒtəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to cut through the vagus nerve which controls the nerves in the stomach, as a treatment for peptic ulcers

**vagus** /'veɪgəs/, **vagus nerve** /'veɪgəs nɜ:z/ *noun* either of the tenth pair of cranial nerves which carry sensory and motor neurons serving the heart, lungs, stomach, and various other organs and control swallowing. Also called **pneumogastric nerve**

**valgus** /'vælɡəs/, **valgum** /'vælɡəm/, **valga** /'vælɡə/ *adjective* turning outwards. † **hallux valgus**. Compare **varus**

**validity** /və'ɪdɪtɪ/ *noun* (of a study) the fact of being based on sound research and methods which exclude alternative explanations of a result

**valine** /'veɪlɪn/ *noun* an essential amino acid

**Valium** /'væliəm/ a trade name for diazepam

**vallate papillae** /,vælɛtɪ pə'pɪliː/ *plural noun* large papillae which form a line towards the back of the tongue and contain taste buds

**Valsalva's manoeuvre** /væl'sælvəz mə'nu:və/ *noun* the process of breathing out while holding the nostrils closed and keeping the mouth shut, used in order to test the functioning of the Eustachian tubes or to adjust the pressure in the middle ear

**valve** /vælv/ *noun* a flap which opens and closes to allow liquid to pass in one direction only, e.g. in the heart, blood vessels or lymphatic vessels

**valvotomy** /væl'vɒtəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to cut into a valve to make it open wider

**valvula** /'vælvjʊlə/ *noun* a small valve (NOTE: The plural is **valvulae**.)

**valvulitis** /,vælvju'laitɪs/ *noun* inflammation of a valve in the heart

**valvuloplasty** /'vælvjʊləplæsti/ *noun* surgery to repair valves in the heart without opening the heart

**valvulotomy** /,vælvju'ɒntəmi/ *noun* same as **valvotomy**

**vancomycin** /,væŋkəu'maɪsɪn/ *noun* an antibiotic which is effective against some bacteria which are resistant to other antibiotics. Strains of bacteria resistant to vancomycin have now developed.

**van den Bergh test** /,væn den 'bɜ:ɡ ,test/ *noun* a test of blood serum to see if a case of jaundice is caused by an obstruction in the liver or by haemolysis of red blood cells [After A.A. Hijmans van den Bergh (1869–1943), Dutch physician.]

**vaporiser** /'veɪpəraɪzə/, **vaporizer** *noun* a device which warms a liquid to which medicinal oil has been added, so that it provides a vapour which someone can inhale

**vapour** /'veɪpə/ *noun* **1.** a substance in the form of a gas **2.** steam from a mixture of a liquid and a medicinal oil

**vara** /'vɛərə/ *adjective* same as **varus**

**variant CJD** /,vɛəriənt ,sɪ:dʒeɪ 'diː/ *noun* a form of Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease which was observed first in the 1980s, especially affecting younger people. Abbreviation **vCJD**

**varicectomy** /,væri'sektəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to remove a vein or part of a vein

**varicella** /,væri'selə/ *noun* same as **chickenpox**

**varices** /'værisiːz/ *plural of varix*

**varicose** /'væri:kəʊs/ *adjective* **1.** affected with or having varicose veins **2.** designed for the treatment of varicose veins **3.** relating to or producing swelling

**varicose eczema** /,væri:kəʊs 'eksmə/ *noun* eczema which develops on the legs, caused by bad circulation. Also called **hypostatic eczema**

**varicose ulcer** /,væri:kəʊs 'ʌlsə/ *noun* an ulcer in the leg as a result of bad circulation and varicose veins

**varicose vein** /,væri:kəʊs 'veɪn/ *noun* a vein, usually in the legs, which becomes twisted and swollen

**varicosity** /,væri'kɒsɪti/ *noun (of veins)* the condition of being swollen and twisted

**varicotomy** /,væri'kɒtəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to make a cut into a varicose vein

**varifocals** /'vɛəri,fəʊk(ə)lz/ *plural noun* spectacles with lenses which have varying focal lengths from top to bottom, for looking at things at different distances from the wearer

**variola** /və'raɪələ/ *noun* same as **smallpox**

**varix** /'vɛəriks/ *noun* a swollen blood vessel, especially a swollen vein in the leg (NOTE: The plural is **varices**.)

**varus** /'vɛərəs/, **varum** /'vɛərəm/, **vara** /'vɛərə/ *adjective* turning inwards. ⚔ **coxa vara**. Compare **valgus**

**vas** /væs/ *noun* a tube in the body (NOTE: The plural is **vasa**.)

**vas-** /væs/ *prefix* same as **vaso-**

**vasa efferentia** /,veɪsə ,ɛfə'rentɪə/ *plural noun* the group of small tubes which sperm travel down from the testis to the epididymis

**vasa vasorum** /,veɪsə vɛɪ'sɔ:ərəm/ *plural noun* tiny blood vessels in the walls of larger blood vessels

**vascular** /'væskjʊlə/ *adjective* referring to blood vessels

**vascularisation** /,væskjʊləraɪ'zeɪf(ə)n/, **vascularization** *noun* the development of new blood vessels

**vascular lesion** /,væskjʊlə 'li:z(ə)n/ *noun* damage to a blood vessel

**vascular system** /'væskjʊlə ,sɪstəm/ *noun* the series of vessels such as veins, arteries and capillaries, carrying blood around the body

**vasculitis** /,væskju'laitɪs/ *noun* inflammation of a blood vessel

**vas deferens** /,væs 'defərənz/ *noun* see illustration at **UROGENITAL SYSTEM (MALE)** in Supplement. Also called **ductus deferens**, **sperm duct** (NOTE: The plural is **vasa deferentia**.)

**vasectomy** /və'sektəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to cut a vas deferens, in order to prevent sperm travelling from the epididymis up the duct

**vas efferens** /,væs 'ɛfərənz/ *noun* one of many tiny tubes which take the spermatozoa from the testis to the epididymis (NOTE: The plural is **vasa efferentia**.)

**vaso-** /veɪzəʊ/ *prefix* **1.** referring to a blood vessel **2.** referring to the vas deferens

**vasoactive** /,veɪzəʊ'æktɪv/ *adjective* having an effect on the blood vessels, especially constricting the arteries

**vasoconstriction** /,veɪzəʊkən'strɪkʃən/ *noun* a contraction of blood vessels which makes them narrower

**vasoconstrictor** /,veɪzəʊkən'strɪktə/ *noun* a chemical substance which makes blood vessels become narrower, so that blood pressure rises, e.g. ephedrine hydrochloride

**vasodilatation** /,veɪzəʊ,darɪlə'teɪʃ(ə)n/,  
**vasodilation** /,veɪzəʊdarɪ'leɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the relaxation of blood vessels, especially the arteries, making them wider and leading to increased blood flow or reduced blood pressure

**vasodilator** /,veɪzəʊdarɪ'leɪtə/ *noun* a chemical substance which makes blood vessels become wider, so that blood flows more easily and blood pressure falls, e.g. hydralazine hydrochloride

**vaso-epididymostomy** /,veɪzəʊ ,epɪdɪdɪ'mɒstəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to reverse a vasectomy in which the cut end of the vas deferens is joined to a tubule within the epididymis above a blockage in it

**vasomotion** /veɪzə'məʊʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the control of the diameter of blood vessels and thus of blood flow. ♢ **vasoconstriction, vasodilatation**

**vasomotor** /,veɪzəʊ'məʊtə/ *adjective* referring to the control of the diameter of blood vessels

**vasomotor centre** /,veɪzə'məʊtə ,sentə/ *noun* a nerve centre in the brain which changes the rate of heartbeat and the diameter of blood vessels and so regulates blood pressure

**vasomotor nerve** /,veɪzəʊ'məʊtə ,nɜ:v/ *noun* a nerve in the wall of a blood vessel which affects the diameter of the vessel

**vasopressor** /,veɪzəʊ'presə/ *noun* a substance which increases blood pressure by narrowing the blood vessels

**vasospasm** /'veɪzəʊspæzəm/ *noun* a muscle spasm causing the fingers to become cold, white and numb. ♢ **Raynaud's disease**

**vasovagal** /,veɪzəʊ'veɪg(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to the vagus nerve and its effect on the heartbeat and blood circulation

**vasovagal attack** /,veɪzəʊ'veɪg(ə)l ə,tæk/ *noun* a fainting fit as a result of a slowing down of the heartbeats caused by excessive activity of the vagus nerve

**vasovasostomy** /,veɪzəʊvə'sɒstəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to reverse a vasectomy

**vasovesiculitis** /,veɪzəʊvesɪkjʊ'laitɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the seminal vesicles and a vas deferens

**VBAC** *abbreviation* vaginal birth after Caesarean section

**vCJD** *abbreviation* variant CJD

**VD** *abbreviation* venereal disease

**VD clinic** /,vi: 'di: ,klɪnɪk/ *noun* a clinic specialising in the diagnosis and treatment of venereal diseases

**vector** /'vektə/ *noun* an insect or animal which carries a disease and can pass it to humans ○ *The tsetse fly is a vector of sleeping sickness.*

**vegan** /'vi:gən/ *noun* someone who does not eat meat, dairy produce, eggs or fish and eats only vegetables and fruit ■ *adjective* involving a diet of only vegetables and fruit

**vegetarian** /,vedʒɪ'teəriən/ *noun* someone who does not eat meat, but eats mainly vegetables and fruit and sometimes dairy produce, eggs or fish ■ *adjective* involving a diet without meat

**vegetation** /,vedʒɪ'teɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a growth on a membrane, e.g. on the cusps of valves in the heart

**vegetative** /'vedʒɪtətɪv/ *adjective* referring to growth of tissue or organs

**vehicle** /'vi:ɪk(ə)l/ *noun* a liquid in which a dose of a drug is put

**vein** /veɪn/ *noun* a blood vessel which takes deoxygenated blood containing waste carbon dioxide from the tissues back to the heart (NOTE: For other terms referring to veins see words beginning **phleb-**, **phlebo-** or **vene-**, **veno-**.)

**vena cava** /,vi:nə 'keɪvə/ *noun* one of two large veins which take deoxygenated blood from all the other veins into the right atrium of the heart. See illustration at **HEART** in Supplement, **KIDNEY** in Supplement (NOTE: The plural is **venae cavae**.)

**vene-** /venɪ/ *prefix* referring to veins

**venepuncture** /'venɪpʌŋktʃə/ *noun* the act of puncturing a vein either to inject a drug or to take a blood sample

**venereal** /və'nɪəriəl/ *adjective* 1. relating to sex acts or sexual desire 2. relating to the genitals 3. referring to an infection or disease which is transmitted through sexual intercourse ○ *venereal warts*

**venereal disease** /və'nɪəriəl dɪ,zɪz/ *noun* a disease which is passed from one person to another during sexual intercourse. Abbreviation **VD** (NOTE: Now usually called a **sexually transmitted infection (STI)**.)

**venereal wart** /və'nɪəriəl 'wɔ:t/ *noun* a wart on the genitals or in the urogenital area

**venereology** /və'nɪəri'blədʒi/ *noun* the scientific study of venereal diseases

**venesection** /,venɪ'sekʃən/ *noun* an operation where a vein is cut so that blood can be removed, e.g. when taking blood from a donor

**venipuncture** /'venɪpʌŋktʃə/ *noun* same as **venepuncture**

**veno-** /vi:nəʊ/ *prefix* referring to veins

**venoclysis** /və'nɒklɪsɪs/ *noun* the procedure of slowly introducing a saline or other solution into a vein

**venogram** /'vi:nəgræm/ *noun* same as **phlebogram**



**venography** /vɪ'nɒgrəfi/ *noun* same as **phlebography**

**venom** /'venəm/ *noun* a poison in the bite of a snake or insect

**venous** /'vi:nəs/ *adjective* referring to the veins

**venous blood** /'vi:nəs bləd/ *noun* same as **deoxygenated blood**

**venous system** /'vi:nəs ,sɪstəm/ *noun* a system of veins which brings blood back to the heart from the tissues

**venous thrombosis** /,vi:nəs θrɒm'bəʊsɪs/ *noun* the blocking of a vein by a blood clot

**venous ulcer** /,vi:nəs 'ʌlsə/ *noun* an ulcer in the leg, caused by varicose veins or by a blood clot

**ventilation** /,ventɪ'leɪf(ə)n/ *noun* the act of breathing air in or out of the lungs, so removing waste products from the blood in exchange for oxygen. † **dead space**

**ventilator** /'ventɪleɪtə/ *noun* a machine which pumps air into and out of the lungs of someone who has difficulty in breathing ○ *The newborn baby was put on a ventilator.* Also called **respirator**

**Ventimask** /'ventɪmɑːsk/ a trademark for a type of oxygen mask

**Ventolin** /'ventəlɪn/ a trade name for salbutamol

**ventouse** /'ventuːs/ *noun* a cup-like vacuum device attached to the top of an unborn baby's head in the process of delivery, used to enable a distressed baby to be born quickly

**ventral** /'ventr(ə)l/ *adjective* **1.** referring to the abdomen **2.** referring to the front of the body. Opposite **dorsal**

**ventricle** /'ventrɪk(ə)l/ *noun* a cavity in an organ, especially in the heart or brain. See illustration at **HEART** in Supplement

**ventricul-** /ventrɪkjʊl/ *prefix* referring to a ventricle in the brain or heart

**ventricular** /ven'trɪkjʊlə/ *adjective* referring to the ventricles

**ventricular fibrillation** /ven'trɪkjʊlə ,faɪbrɪ'leɪf(ə)n/ *noun* a serious heart condition where the ventricular muscles flutter and the heart no longer beats. Abbreviation **VF**

**ventricular folds** /ven'trɪkjʊlə fəʊldz/ *plural noun* same as **vocal cords**

**ventricular septal defect** /ven'trɪkjʊlə 'sept(ə)l dɪ'fekt/ *noun* a condition in which blood can flow between the two ventricles of the heart, because the intraventricular septum has not developed properly. Abbreviation **VSD**

**ventriculoatriostomy** /ven'trɪkjʊləʊ,etɪrɪ'bɒstəmi/ *noun* an operation to relieve pressure caused by excessive quantities of cerebrospinal fluid in the brain ventricles

**ventriculo-peritoneal shunt** /ven'trɪkjʊlə ,perɪtə,nɪ:əl 'ʃʌnt/ *noun* an artificial drain used in hydrocephalus to drain cerebrospinal fluid from the ventricles

**ventriculoscapy** /ven'trɪkjʊ'lɒskəpi/ *noun* an examination of the brain using an endoscope

**ventriculostomy** /ven'trɪkjʊ'lɒstəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to pass a hollow needle into a ventricle of the brain so as to reduce pressure, take a sample of fluid or enlarge the ventricular opening to prevent the need for a shunt

**ventro-** /ventrəʊ/ *prefix* ventral

**ventrofixation** /,ventrəʊfɪk'seɪf(ə)n/ *noun* a surgical operation to treat retroversion of the uterus by attaching the uterus to the wall of the abdomen

**ventrosuspension** /,ventrəʊsə'spenʃən/ *noun* a surgical operation to treat retroversion of the uterus

**Venturi mask** /ven'tjʊəri mɑːsk/ *noun* a type of disposable mask which gives the person a controlled mixture of oxygen and air

**Venturi nebuliser** /ven'tjʊəri ,nebʊləɪzə/ *noun* a type of nebuliser which is used in aerosol therapy

**venule** /'venjuːl/ *noun* a small vein or vessel leading from tissue to a larger vein

**vera** /'vɪərə/ † **decidua**

**verapamil** /və'ræpəmi/ *noun* a synthetic compound which helps to prevent the movement of calcium ions across membranes. It is used in the treatment of angina pectoris, hypertension and irregular heartbeat.

**vermiform appendix** /,vɜːmfɔːm ə 'pendɪks/ *noun* same as **appendix 1**

**vermillion border** /və'mɪliən 'bɔːdə/ *noun* the external red parts of the lips

**vermix** /'vɜːmɪks/ *noun* a vermiform appendix

**vernix caseosa** /,vɜːnɪks keɪsɪ'əʊsə/ *noun* an oily substance which covers a baby's skin at birth

**verruca** /və'ruːkə/ *noun* a small hard harmless growth on the sole of the foot, caused by a virus (NOTE: Verrucas are a type of wart. The plural is **verrucae** or **verrucae**.)

**version** /'vɜːʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the procedure of turning a fetus in a uterus so as to put it in a better position for birth

**vertebra** /'vɜːtɪbrə/ *noun* one of twenty-four ring-shaped bones which link together to form the backbone. See illustration at **CARTILAGINOUS JOINT** in Supplement (NOTE: The plural is **vertebrae**.)

**vertebral** /'vɜːtɪbrəl/ *adjective* referring to the vertebrae

**vertebral artery** /,vɜːtɪbrəl 'ɑːtəri/ *noun* one of two arteries which go up the back of the neck into the brain

**vertebral canal** /ˌvɜːtɪbrəl kəˈnæl/ *noun* same as **spinal canal**

**vertebral column** /ˌvɜːtɪbrəl ˈkɒləm/ *noun* the series of bones and discs linked together to form a flexible column running from the base of the skull to the pelvis. Also called **backbone**, **spinal column**. See illustration at **PELVIS** in Supplement

**vertebral disc** /ˌvɜːtɪbrəl ˈdɪsk/ *noun* same as **intervertebral disc**

**vertebral foramen** /ˌvɜːtɪbrəl fəˈreɪmən/ *noun* a hole in the centre of a vertebra which links with others to form the vertebral canal through which the spinal cord passes

**vertex** /ˈvɜːteks/ *noun* the top of the skull

**vertex delivery** /ˈvɜːteks dɪˌlɪv(ə)ri/ *noun* a normal birth, where the baby's head appears first

**vertigo** /ˈvɜːtɪɡəʊ/ *noun* 1. feelings of dizziness or giddiness caused by a malfunction of the sense of balance 2. a fear of heights, as a result of a sensation of dizziness which is felt when high up, especially on a tall building ○ *She won't sit near the window – she suffers from vertigo.*

**vesical** /ˈvesɪk(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to the bladder

**vesicle** /ˈvesɪk(ə)l/ *noun* 1. a small blister on the skin, e.g. caused by eczema 2. a sac which contains liquid

**vesico-** /vesɪkəʊ/ *prefix* referring to the urinary bladder

**vesicostomy** /ˌvesɪˈkɒstəmi/, **vesicotomy** /ˌvesɪˈkɒtəmi/ *noun* same as **cystostomy**

**vesicoureteric reflux** /ˌvesɪkəʊjʊəriˌtɛrɪk ˈrɪːflʌks/ *noun* the flowing of urine back from the bladder up the ureters during urination, which may carry infection from the bladder to the kidneys. Also called **vesicoureteric reflux**

**vesicoureteric** /ˌvesɪkəʊjʊˈretɪk/ *adjective* relating to the urinary bladder and the ureters

**vesicoureteric reflux** /ˌvesɪkəʊjʊˌretɪk ˈrɪːflʌks/ *noun* same as **vesicoureteric reflux**

**vesicovaginal** /ˌvesɪkəʊvəˈdʒaɪn(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to the bladder and the vagina

**vesicovaginal fistula** /ˌvesɪkəʊvəˈdʒaɪn(ə)l ˈfɪstjʊlə/ *noun* an unusual opening between the bladder and the vagina

**vesicular** /vəˈsɪkjʊlə/ *adjective* referring to a vesicle

**vesicular breathing** /vəˈsɪkjʊlə ˈbrɪːðɪŋ/, **vesicular breath sound** /vəˈsɪkjʊlə ˈbreθ saʊnd/ *plural noun* the sound made during the normal breathing process

**vesiculation** /vəˈsɪkjʊˈleɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the formation of blisters on the skin

**vesiculitis** /vəˈsɪkjʊˈlaɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the seminal vesicles

**vesiculography** /vəˈsɪkjʊˈlɒgrəfi/ *noun* an X-ray examination of the seminal vesicles

**vesiculopapular** /vəˈsɪkjʊləʊˈpæpjʊlə/ *adjective* referring to a skin disorder which has both blisters and papules

**vesiculopustular** /vəˈsɪkjʊləʊˈpʌstjʊlə/ *adjective* referring to a skin disorder which has both blisters and pustules

**vessel** /ˈves(ə)l/ *noun* 1. a tube in the body along which liquid flows, especially a blood vessel 2. a container for fluids

**vestibular** /veˈstɪbjʊlə/ *adjective* referring to a vestibule, especially the vestibule of the inner ear

**vestibular glands** /veˈstɪbjʊlə glændz/ *plural noun* the glands at the point where the vagina and vulva join, which secrete a lubricating substance

**vestibular nerve** /veˈstɪbjʊlə nɜːv/ *noun* the part of the auditory nerve which carries information about balance to the brain

**vestibule** /ˈvestɪbjʊːl/ *noun* a cavity in the body at the entrance to an organ, especially the first cavity in the inner ear or the space in the larynx above the vocal cords or a nostril. See illustration at **EAR** in Supplement

**vestibulocochlear nerve** /veˌstɪbjʊləʊ ˈkɒkliə ˌnɜːv/ *noun* the eighth cranial nerve which governs hearing and balance. Also called **acoustic nerve**, **auditory nerve**

**vestigial** /vesˈtɪdʒiəl/ *adjective* existing in a rudimentary form ○ *The coccyx is a vestigial tail.*

**VF** *abbreviation* ventricular fibrillation

**viable** /ˈvaɪəb(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to a fetus which can survive if born ○ *A fetus is viable by about the 28th week of pregnancy.*

**Viagra** /vaɪˈægrə/ a trade name for sildenafil citrate

**vial** /ˈvaɪəl/ *noun* same as **phial**

**Vibramycin** /ˌvaɪbrəˈmaɪsɪn/ a trade name for doxycycline

**vibrate** /vaɪˈbreɪt/ *verb* to move rapidly and continuously

**vibration** /vaɪˈbreɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* rapid and continuous movement ○ *Speech is formed by the vibrations of the vocal cords.*

**Vibrio** /ˌvɪbrɪəʊ/ *noun* a genus of Gram-negative bacteria which are found in water and cause cholera

**vibrissae** /vaɪˈbrɪsɪː/ *plural noun* hairs in the nostrils or ears

**vicarious** /vɪˈkeəriəs/ *adjective* done by one organ or agent in place of another

**vicarious menstruation** /vɪˌkeəriəs ˌmenstruˈeɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the discharge of blood other than by the vagina during menstrual periods

**victim** /ˈvɪktɪm/ *noun* a person who is injured in an accident or who has caught a disease ○ *The victims of the rail crash were taken to the local hospital.* □ **to fall victim to something** to become a victim of or to experience bad effects

from something ○ *Half the people eating at the restaurant fell victim to salmonella poisoning.*

**vigour** /'vɪɡə/ *noun* a combination of positive attributes expressed in rapid growth, large size, high fertility and long life in an organism

**villous** /'vɪləs/ *adjective* shaped like a villus, or formed of villi

**villus** /'vɪləs/ *noun* a tiny projection like a finger on the surface of a mucous membrane (NOTE: The plural is **villi**.)

**vinblastine** /vɪn'blæsti:n/ *noun* an alkaloid drug used in the treatment of cancer

**vincristine** /vɪn'krɪsti:n/ *noun* an alkaloid drug similar to vinblastine, also used in the treatment of cancer. It works by blocking cell division and is highly toxic.

**viraemia** /vaɪ'ri:miə/ *noun* a virus in the blood

**viral hepatitis** /,vaɪrəl ,hepə'taɪtɪs/ *noun* same as **serum hepatitis**

**viral infection** /'vaɪrəl ɪn'fekʃən/ *noun* an infection caused by a virus

**viral pneumonia** /,vaɪrəl nju:'məʊniə/ *noun* a type of inflammation of the lungs caused by a virus. Also called **virus pneumonia**

**virilisation** /,vɪrɪləɪ'zeɪʃ(ə)n/, **virilization** *noun* the development of male characteristics in a woman, caused by a hormone imbalance or therapy

**virilism** /'vɪrɪlɪz(ə)m/ *noun* male characteristics such as body hair and a deep voice in a woman

**virology** /vaɪ'rɒlədʒi/ *noun* the scientific study of viruses

**virulence** /'vɪrələns/ *noun* **1.** the ability of a microorganism to cause a disease **2.** the degree of effect of a disease

**virulent** /'vɪrələnt/ *adjective* **1.** referring to the ability of a microorganism to cause a disease ○ *an unusually virulent strain of the virus* **2.** referring to a disease which develops rapidly and has strong effects

**virus** /'vaɪrəs/ *noun* a parasite consisting of a nucleic acid surrounded by a protein coat that can only develop in other cells. Viruses cause many diseases including the common cold, AIDS, herpes and polio. (NOTE: Antibiotics have no effect on viruses, but effective vaccines have been developed for some viral diseases.)

**virus pneumonia** /,vaɪrəs nju:'məʊniə/ *noun* same as **viral pneumonia**

**viscera** /'vɪsərə/ *plural noun* the internal organs, e.g. the heart, lungs, stomach and intestines

**visceral** /'vɪsərəl/ *adjective* referring to the internal organs

**visceral larva migrans** /,vɪsərəl ,lɑ:və 'maɪgrənz/ *noun* same as **toxocariasis**

**visceral pleura** /,vɪsərəl 'pluərə/ *noun* a membrane attached to the surface of a lung. See illustration at **LUNGS** in Supplement

**visceral pouch** /'vɪsərəl paʊtʃ/ *noun* same as **pharyngeal pouch**

**viscero-** /vɪsərəʊ/ *prefix* relating to the viscera

**viscid** /'vɪsɪd/ *adjective* referring to a liquid which is sticky and slow-moving

**viscosity** /vɪ'skɒsɪti/ *noun* the state of a liquid which moves slowly

**viscous** /'vɪskəs/ *adjective* referring to a liquid which is thick and slow-moving

**viscus** /'vɪskəs/ ♦ **viscera**

**vision** /'vɪʒ(ə)n/ *noun* the ability to see, eyesight ○ *After the age of 50, many people's vision begins to fail.*

**visual** /'vɪʒʊəl/ *adjective* referring to sight or vision

**visual acuity** /,vɪʒʊəl ə'kju:ɪti/ *noun* the ability to see objects clearly

**visual cortex** /,vɪʒʊəl 'kɔ:teks/ *noun* the part of the cerebral cortex which receives information about sight

**visual field** /'vɪʒʊəl fi:ld/ *noun* the area which can be seen without moving the eye. Also called **field of vision**

**visualisation** /,vɪʒʊələɪ'zeɪʃ(ə)n/, **visualization** *noun* **1.** a technique in which an image of an internal organ or other part of the body is produced by using X-rays or other means such as magnetic resonance imaging **2.** a technique in which someone creates a strongly positive mental picture of something such as the way in which they would like to solve a problem, in order to help them cope with it

**visually impaired person** /,vɪʒʊəli ɪm'peəd 'pɜ:s(ə)n/ *noun* a person whose eyesight is not clear

**visual purple** /,vɪʒʊəl 'pɜ:p(ə)l/ *noun* same as **rhodopsin**

**vital** /'vaɪt(ə)l/ *adjective* very important or necessary for life ○ *If circulation is stopped, neural nerve cells begin to die in a few minutes.* ○ *Oxygen is vital to the human system.*

**vital capacity** /,vaɪt(ə)l kə'pæsɪti/ *noun* the largest amount of air which a person can exhale at one time

**vital organs** /,vaɪt(ə)l 'vɜ:gənz/ *plural noun* the most important organs in the body, without which a human being cannot live, e.g. the heart, lungs and brain

**vital signs** /,vaɪt(ə)l 'saɪnz/ *plural noun* measurements of pulse, breathing and temperature

**vital statistics** /,vaɪt(ə)l stə'tɪstɪks/ *plural noun* a set of official statistics relating to the population of a place, such as the percentage of live births per thousand, the incidence of particular diseases and the numbers of births and deaths

**vitamin** /'vɪtəˌmɪn/ *noun* an essential substance not synthesised in the body, but found in most foods, and needed for good health

**Vitamin A** /,vɪtəˌmɪn 'eɪ/ *noun* a vitamin which is soluble in fat and can be formed in the body from precursors but is mainly found in food such as liver, vegetables, eggs and cod liver oil. Also called **retinol**

**Vitamin B<sub>1</sub>** /,vɪtəˌmɪn bi: 'wʌn/ *noun* a vitamin found in yeast, liver, cereals and pork. Also called **thiamine**

**Vitamin B<sub>2</sub>** /,vɪtəˌmɪn bi: 'tu:/ *noun* a vitamin found in eggs, liver, green vegetables, milk and yeast. Also called **riboflavine**

**Vitamin B<sub>6</sub>** /,vɪtəˌmɪn bi: 'sɪks/ *noun* a vitamin found in meat, cereals and molasses. Also called **pyridoxine**

**Vitamin B<sub>12</sub>** /,vɪtəˌmɪn bi: 'twelv/ *noun* a vitamin found in liver and kidney, but not present in vegetables. Also called **cyanocobalamin**

**Vitamin B complex** /,vɪtəˌmɪn bi: 'kɒmpleks/ *noun* a group of vitamins such as folic acid, riboflavin and thiamine

**Vitamin C** /,vɪtəˌmɪn 'si:/ *noun* a vitamin which is soluble in water and is found in fresh fruit, especially oranges and lemons, raw vegetables and liver. Also called **ascorbic acid**

**Vitamin D** /,vɪtəˌmɪn 'di:/ *noun* a vitamin which is soluble in fat and is found in butter, eggs and fish. It is also produced by the skin when exposed to sunlight. It helps in the formation of bones, and lack of it causes rickets in children.

**vitamin deficiency** /'vɪtəˌmɪn dɪˌfɪʃ(ə)nsi/ *noun* a lack of necessary vitamins ○ *He is suffering from Vitamin A deficiency.* ○ *Vitamin C deficiency causes scurvy.*

**Vitamin E** /,vɪtəˌmɪn 'i:/ *noun* a vitamin found in vegetables, vegetable oils, eggs and wholemeal bread

**Vitamin K** /,vɪtəˌmɪn 'keɪ/ *noun* a vitamin found in green vegetables such as spinach and cabbage, and which helps the clotting of blood and is needed to activate prothrombin

**vitaligo** /,vɪtɪ'laɪgəʊl/ *noun* a condition in which white patches appear on the skin. Also called **leucoderma**

**vitrectomy** /vɪ'trektəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to remove some or all of the vitreous humour of the eye

**vitreous** /'vɪtriəs/ *adjective* **1.** having the characteristics of glass **2.** relating to the vitreous humour of the eye

**vitreous body** /'vɪtriəs 'bɒdi/ *noun* same as **vitreous humour**

**vitreous detachment** /,vɪtriəs dɪ'tætʃmənt/ *noun* the separation of the vitreous humour from the retina, often due to natural ageing when the vitreous humour thins, but also occurring in other conditions such as diabetes

**vitreous humour** /,vɪtriəs 'hju:mə/ *noun* a transparent jelly which fills the main cavity behind the lens in the eye. See illustration at **EYE** in Supplement

**vitritis** /vɪ'traɪtɪs/ *noun* same as **hyalitis**

**vitro** /'vɪtriəʊ/ **◆** *in vitro*

**Vitus** /'vaɪtəs/ **◆** **St Vitus's dance**

**vivisection** /,vɪvɪ'sekʃən/ *noun* the act of dissecting a living animal as an experiment

**vocal** /'vəʊk(ə)l/ *adjective* referring to the voice

**vocal cords** /'vəʊk(ə)l kɔ:dz/ *plural noun* a pair of fibrous sheets of tissue which span the cavity of the voice box (**larynx**) and produce sounds by vibrating. Also called **ventricular folds**

**vocal folds** /'vəʊk(ə)l fəʊldz/ *plural noun* same as **vocal cords**

**vocal folds abducted** /,vəʊk(ə)l fəʊldz əb 'dʌktɪd/ *noun* the usual condition of the vocal cords in quiet breathing

**vocal folds adducted** /,vəʊk(ə)l fəʊldz ə 'dʌktɪd/ *noun* the position of the vocal cords for speaking

**vocal fremitus** /,vəʊk(ə)l 'fremɪtəs/ *noun* a vibration of the chest when a person speaks or coughs

**vocal resonance** /,vəʊk(ə)l 'rezənəns/ *noun* a sound heard by a doctor when he or she listens through a stethoscope to the chest while a person is speaking

**volar** /'vəʊlə/ *adjective* referring to the palm of the hand or sole of the foot

**volatile** /'vɒlətaɪl/ *adjective* referring to a liquid which turns into gas at room temperature

**volitantes** /vɒlɪ'tæntɪz/ **◆** **muscae volitantes**

**volition** /və'ɪlɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the ability to use the will

**Volkman's contracture** /'fɒlkmə:nz kən 'træktʃəl/ *noun* a fibrosis and tightening of the muscles of the forearm because blood supply has been restricted, leading to contraction of the fingers

**voisella** /vɒl'selə/ *noun* a type of surgical forceps with claw-like hooks at the end of each arm. Also called **vulsella**

**volume** /'vɒljʊ:m/ *noun* an amount of a substance

**voluntary** /'vɒlənt(ə)rɪ/ *adjective* done because one wishes to do it

**voluntary admission** /,vɒlənt(ə)rɪ əd 'mɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the process of taking someone into a psychiatric hospital with the person's consent

**voluntary movement** /,vɒlənt(ə)rɪ 'mu:vmənt/ *noun* a movement directed by the person's willpower, using voluntary muscles, e.g. walking or speaking

**voluntary muscle** /'vɒlənt(ə)rɪ ˌmʌs(ə)/ *noun* a muscle which is consciously controlled. It is usually made up of striated fibres.

COMMENT: Voluntary muscles work in pairs, where one contracts and pulls, while the other relaxes to allow the bone to move.

**volvulus** /'vɒlvjʊləs/ *noun* a condition in which a loop of intestine is twisted and blocked, so cutting off its blood supply

**vomer** /'vəʊmə/ *noun* a thin flat vertical bone in the septum of the nose

**vomica** /'vɒmɪkə/ *noun* 1. a cavity in the lungs containing pus 2. the act of vomiting pus from the throat or lungs

**vomit** /'vɒmɪt/ *noun* partly digested food which has been brought up from the stomach into the mouth ○ *His bed was covered with vomit.* ○ *She died after choking on her own vomit.* Also called **vomit** ■ *verb* to bring up partly digested food from the stomach into the mouth ○ *He had a fever, and then started to vomit.* ○ *She vomited her breakfast.*

**vomiting** /'vɒmɪtɪŋ/ *noun* the act of bringing up vomit into the mouth. Also called **emesis**

**vomit** /'vɒmɪtəs/ *noun* same as **vomit**

**von Hippel-Lindau syndrome** /vɒn ˌhɪp(ə)l ˈlɪndəʊ ˌsɪndrəʊm/ *noun* a disease in which angiomas of the brain are related to angiomas and cysts in other parts of the body

**von Recklinghausen's disease** /,vɒn ˈreklɪŋhaʊz(ə)nz dɪˌzɪːz/ *noun* 1. same as **neurofibromatosis** 2. same as **osteitis fibrosis**

**cystica** [Described 1882. After Friedrich Daniel von Recklinghausen (1833–1910), Professor of Pathology at Strasbourg, France.]

**von Willebrand's disease** /,vɒn ˈvɪlbrændz dɪˌzɪːz/ *noun* a hereditary blood disease, occurring in both sexes, in which the mucous membrane starts to bleed without any apparent reason. It is caused by a deficiency of a clotting factor in the blood, called von Willebrand's factor. [Described 1926. After E. A. von Willebrand (1870–1949), Finnish physician.]

**von Willebrand's factor** /,vɒn ˈvɪlbrændz ˌfæktə/ *noun* a protein substance in plasma involved in platelet aggregation

**VSD** *abbreviation* ventricular septal defect

**vulgaris** /vʌlˈɡeəriːs/ ♦ **lupus vulgaris**

**vulsella** /vʌlˈselə/, **vulsellum** /vʌlˈseləm/ *noun* same as **voisella**

**vulv-** /vʌlv/ *prefix* referring to the vulva (*used before vowels*)

**vulva** /'vʌlvə/ *noun* a woman's external sexual organs, at the opening leading to the vagina. † **kraurosis vulvae** (NOTE: For other terms referring to the vulva, see words beginning with **episi-**.)

**vulvectomy** /vʌlˈvektəmi/ *noun* a surgical operation to remove the vulva

**vulvitis** /vʌlˈvaɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the vulva, causing intense irritation

**vulvovaginitis** /,vʌlvəʊvædʒɪˈnaɪtɪs/ *noun* inflammation of the vulva and vagina

# W

**waiting list** /'weɪtɪŋ lɪst/ *noun* a list of people waiting for admission to hospital usually for treatment of non-urgent disorders ○ *The length of waiting lists for non-emergency surgery varies enormously from one region to another.* ○ *It is hoped that hospital waiting lists will get shorter.*

**walking distance** /'wɔːkɪŋ ,dɪstəns/ *noun* the distance which someone can walk before they experience pain in their muscles, which shows the effectiveness of the blood supply to their legs

**walking frame** /'wɔːkɪŋ freɪm/ *noun* a metal frame used by people who have difficulty in walking. ◊ **Zimmer frame**

**Wangensteen tube** /'wæŋgənstiːn tjuːb/ *noun* a tube which is passed into the stomach to remove the stomach's contents by suction [Described 1832. After Owen Harding Wangensteen (1898–1980), US surgeon.]

**ward** /wɔːd/ *noun* a room or set of rooms in a hospital, with beds for the patients ○ *He is in Ward 8B.* ○ *The children's ward is at the end of the corridor.*

**ward manager** /'wɔːd ,mænɪdʒə/ *noun* a nurse in charge of a ward

**ward nurse** /'wɔːd nɜːs/ *noun* a nurse who works in a hospital ward

**ward sister** /'wɔːd ,sɪstə/ *noun* a senior nurse in charge of a ward

**warfarin** /'wɔːf(ə)rɪn/ *noun* a colourless crystalline compound used to help prevent the blood clotting

**wart** /wɔːt/ *noun* a small hard harmless growth on the skin, usually on the hands, feet or face, caused by a virus (NOTE: Warts on the feet are called **verrucae**.)

**wasting disease** /'weɪstɪŋ dɪ,zɪːz/ *noun* a disease which causes severe loss of weight or reduction in size of an organ

**water** /'wɔːtə/ *noun* **1.** the liquid essential to life which makes up a large part of the body ○ *Can I have a glass of water please?* ○ *They suffered dehydration from lack of water.* □ **water on the knee** fluid in the knee joint under the kneecap, caused by a blow on the knee **2.** urine (*informal*) ○ *He passed a lot of water during the night.* ○ *She noticed blood streaks in her water.* ○ *The*

*nurse asked him to give a sample of his water.* ■ *plural noun waters* the fluid in the amnion in which a fetus floats (*informal*) Also called **amniotic fluid**

**water bed** /'wɔːtə bed/ *noun* a mattress made of a large heavy plastic bag filled with water, used to prevent bedsores

**waterbrash** /'wɔːtəbræʃ/ *noun* a condition caused by dyspepsia, in which there is a burning feeling in the stomach and the mouth suddenly fills with acid saliva

**water-hammer pulse** /'wɔːtə ,hæmə pʌls/ *noun* same as **Corrigan's pulse**

**Waterhouse-Friderichsen syndrome** /,wɔːtəhaʊs 'frɪːdərɪksən ,sɪndrəʊm/ *noun* a condition caused by blood poisoning with meningococci, in which the tissues of the adrenal glands die and haemorrhage [Described 1911 by Rupert Waterhouse (1873–1958), physician at Bath, UK; described 1918 by Carl Friderichsen (1886–1979), Danish physician.]

**Waterston's operation** /'wɔːtəstənz ,ɒpəreɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a surgical operation to treat Fallot's tetralogy, in which the right pulmonary artery is joined to the ascending aorta [After David James Waterston (1910–85), paediatric surgeon in London, UK]

**waterworks** /'wɔːtəwɜːks/ *plural noun* same as **urinary system** (*informal*)

**Watson-Crick helix** /,wɒts(ə)n 'krɪk ,hiːlɪks/ *noun* a molecular model for DNA in which the organic base pairs are linked by hydrogen bonds which form the rungs of a ladder spiralling in the form of a helix

**WBC** *abbreviation* white blood cell

**weal** /wiːl/ *noun* a small area of skin which swells because of a sharp blow or an insect bite

**wean** /wiːn/ *verb* to make a baby stop breast-feeding and take other liquid or solid food, or to make a baby start to eat solid food after having only had liquids to drink ○ *The baby was breast-fed for two months and then was gradually weaned onto the bottle.*

**webbing** /'webɪŋ/ *noun* the condition of having an extra membrane of skin joining two structures in the body together

**Weber-Christian disease** /ˌveɪbə 'krɪstʃən dɪˌziːz/ *noun* a type of panniculitis where the liver and spleen become enlarged [After Frederick Parkes Weber (1863–1962), British physician; Henry Asbury Christian (1876–1951), US physician.]

**Weber's test** /'veɪbəz test/ *noun* a test to see if both ears hear correctly, where a tuning fork is struck and the end placed on the head [After Friedrich Eugen Weber-Liel (1832–91), German otologist.]

**web space** /'web speɪs/ *noun* the soft tissue between the bases of the fingers and toes

**Wechsler scales** /'vekslə skeɪlz/ *plural noun* a set of standardised scales for measuring someone's IQ. There are three separate versions developed for different age groups.

**wee** /wiː/ *verb* same as **urinate** (*informal*)

**weep** /wiːp/ *verb* 1. to cry 2. (of a wound) to ooze fluid

**Wegener's granulomatosis** /ˌveɡənəz ˌgrænjʊləʊmə'təʊsɪs/ *noun* a disease of connective tissue, where the nasal passages, lungs and kidneys are inflamed and ulcerated, with formation of granulomas. It is usually fatal.

**Weil-Felix reaction** /ˌvaɪl 'feɪlɪks rɪˌæksjən/,

**Weil-Felix test** /ˌvaɪl 'feɪlɪks test/ *noun* a test to see if someone has typhus, in which the person's serum is tested for antibodies against *Proteus vulgaris* [Described 1916. After Edmund Weil (1880–1922) Austrian physician and bacteriologist; Arthur Felix (1887–1956), British bacteriologist.]

**Weil's disease** /'weɪlz dɪˌziːz/ *noun* same as **leptospirosis** [Described 1886. After Adolf Weil (1848–1916), physician in Estonia who also practised in Wiesbaden, Germany.]

**well** /wel/ *adjective* healthy ○ *He's not a well man.* ○ *You're looking very well after your holiday.* ○ *He's quite well again after his flu.* ○ *She's not very well, and has had to stay in bed.*

**well-baby clinic** /ˌwel 'beɪbi ˌkλɪnɪk/ *noun* a clinic where parents can ask a doctor or nurse any questions they have about their child's growth and development. Their babies can be weighed and measured and their development monitored.

**wellbeing** /'wel ˌbiːɪŋ/ *noun* the state of being in good health and having good living conditions ○ *She is responsible for the wellbeing of the patients under her care.*

**well-man clinic** /ˌwel 'mæn ˌkλɪnɪk/ *noun* a clinic just for men where they can get check-ups, advice and health information

**well-woman clinic** /ˌwel 'wʊmən ˌkλɪnɪk/ *noun* a clinic which specialises in preventive medicine for women, e.g. breast screening and cervical smear tests, and gives advice on pregnancy, contraception and the menopause

**wen** /wen/ *noun* a cyst which forms in a sebaceous gland

**Werdnig-Hoffmann disease** /ˌvɜːdnɪŋ 'hɒfmən dɪˌziːz/ *noun* a disease in which the spinal muscles atrophy, making the muscles of the shoulders, arms and legs weak. In its most severe form, infants are born floppy, have feeding and breathing problems and rarely live more than two or three years.

**Werner's syndrome** /'wɜːnəz ˌsɪndrəʊm/ *noun* an inherited disorder involving premature ageing, persistent hardening of the skin, underdevelopment of the sex organs and cataracts

**Wernicke's encephalopathy** /ˌvɜːnɪkəz ɛnˌkefə'lɒpəθi/ *noun* a condition caused by lack of Vitamin B, which often affects alcoholics and in which the person is delirious, moves the eyes about rapidly, walks unsteadily and is subject to constant vomiting [Described 1875. After Karl Wernicke (1848–1905), Breslau psychiatrist and neurologist.]

**Wertheim's operation** /'vɜːθaɪmz ɒpəˌreɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a surgical operation to remove the uterus, the lymph nodes which are next to it and most of the vagina, the ovaries and the Fallopian tubes, as treatment for cancer of the uterus [Described 1900. After Ernst Wertheim (1864–1920), Austrian gynaecologist.]

**wet burn** /'wet bɜːn/ *noun* same as **scald**

**Wharton's duct** /ˌwɔːt(ə)nz 'dʌkt/ *noun* a duct which takes saliva into the mouth from the salivary glands under the lower jaw [After Thomas Wharton (1614–73), English physician and anatomist at St Thomas's Hospital, London, UK]

**Wharton's jelly** /ˌwɔːt(ə)nz 'dʒeli/ *noun* a jelly-like tissue in the umbilical cord

**wheel** /wiːl/ same as **weal**

**wheeze** /wiːz/ *noun* a whistling noise in the bronchi ○ *The doctor listened to his wheezes.* ■ *verb* to make a whistling sound when breathing ○ *When she has an attack of asthma, she wheezes and has difficulty in breathing.*

**wheezing** /'wiːzɪŋ/ *noun* whistling noises in the bronchi when breathing. Wheezing is often found in people with asthma and is also associated with bronchitis and heart disease.

**whiplash injury** /'wɪplæʃ ˌɪndʒəri/ *noun* an injury to the vertebrae in the neck, caused when the head jerks backwards, often occurring in a car that is struck from behind

**whiplash shake syndrome** /ˌwɪplæʃ 'feɪk ˌsɪndrəʊm/ *noun* in young babies, a series of internal head injuries caused by being shaken violently. They can result in brain damage leading to speech and learning disabilities, paralysis, seizures, blindness and hearing loss. They are often life-threatening.

**Whipple's disease** /'wɪp(ə)lz dɪˌziːz/ *noun* a disease in which someone has difficulty in

absorbing nutrients and passes fat in the faeces, the joints are inflamed and the lymph glands enlarged [Described 1907. After George Hoyt Whipple (1878–1976), US pathologist. Nobel prize for Pathology and Medicine 1934.]

**Whipple's operation** /'wɪp(ə)lz ɒpə'reɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* same as **pancreatectomy**

**white** /waɪt/ *adjective* of a colour like snow or milk ○ *White patches developed on his skin.* ○ *Her hair has turned quite white.* (NOTE: **whiter** – **whitest**) ■ *noun* the main part of the eye which is white ○ *The whites of his eyes turned yellow when he developed jaundice.*

**white blood cell** /'waɪt 'blʌd ,sel/ *noun* a colourless blood cell which contains a nucleus but has no haemoglobin, is formed in bone marrow and creates antibodies. Abbreviation **WBC**. Also called **leucocyte**

**white finger** /'waɪt ,fɪŋgə/ *noun* a condition in which a finger has a mottled discoloured appearance because its blood vessels are damaged. The thumb is usually not affected. Very severe cases can result in finger loss. It occurs most commonly in Raynaud's disease.

**white leg** /'waɪt leg/ *noun* a condition which affects women after childbirth, in which a leg becomes pale and inflamed as a result of lymphatic obstruction. Also called **milk leg**, **phlegmasia alba dolens**

**white matter** /'waɪt ,mætə/ *noun* nerve tissue in the central nervous system which contains more myelin than grey matter

**white noise instrument** /'waɪt 'nɔɪz ,ɪnstrəmənt/ *noun* a small electronic device worn in the ear. It combines sounds of many different frequencies. It is used to mask internal noise in the ear due to tinnitus.

**whites** /waɪts/ *plural noun* same as **leucorrhoea** (*informal*)

**whitlow** /'wɪtləʊ/ *noun* an inflammation caused by infection near the nail in the fleshy part of the tip of a finger. Also called **felon**

**WHO** *abbreviation* World Health Organization

**whoop** /wu:p, hu:p/ *noun* a loud noise made when inhaling by a person who has whooping cough

**whooping cough** /'hu:pɪŋ kɒf/ *noun* an infectious disease caused by *Bordetella pertussis* affecting the bronchial tubes, common in children, and sometimes very serious. Also called **pertussis**

**Widal reaction** /vi:'dɑ:l rɪ,ækjən/, **Widal test** /vi:'dɑ:l test/ *noun* a test to detect typhoid fever. A sample of the person's blood is put into a solution containing typhoid bacilli, or anti-typhoid serum is added to a sample of bacilli from the person's faeces. If the bacilli agglutinate, i.e. form into groups, this indicates that the person has typhoid fever. [Described 1896. After Georges

Fernand Isidore Widal (1862–1929), French physician and teacher.]

**Willis** /'wɪlz/ ▶ **circle of Willis**

**Wilms' tumour** /'vɪlmz ,tju:mə/ *noun* same as **nephroblastoma** [Described 1899. After Max Wilms (1867–1918), Professor of Surgery at Leipzig, Basle and Heidelberg.]

**Wilson's disease** /'wɪlsənz dɪ,zɪ:z/ *noun* a hereditary disease where copper deposits accumulate in the liver and the brain, causing cirrhosis. Also called **hepatolenticular degeneration** [Described 1912. After Samuel Alexander Kinnier Wilson (1878–1937), British neurologist.]

**windpipe** /'wɪndpaɪp/ *noun* same as **trachea**

**wiring** /'waɪərɪŋ/ *noun* **1.** a network of wires **2.** a neurological or physiological structure or process which controls a function in the body **3.** the act of fixing a piece of bone in place using wires

**wisdom tooth** /'wɪzdəm tu:θ/ *noun* one of the four teeth in the back of the jaw which only appear at about the age of 20 and sometimes do not appear at all. Also called **third molar**

**witch hazel** /'wɪtʃ ,heɪz(ə)/ *noun* a lotion made from the bark of a tree, used to check bleeding and harden inflamed tissue and bruises. Also called **hamamelis**

**withdrawal** /wɪð'drɔ:əl/ *noun* **1.** a loss of interest in having contact with other people, which leads to a person becoming isolated **2.** a period during which a person who has been addicted to a drug stops taking it and experiences unpleasant symptoms

**withdrawal symptom** /wɪð'drɔ:əl ,sɪmptəm/ *noun* an unpleasant physical condition, e.g. vomiting, headaches or fever, which occurs when someone stops taking an addictive drug

**Wolff-Parkinson-White syndrome** /wʊlf ,pɑ:kɪns(ə)n 'waɪt ,sɪndrəʊm/ *noun* a condition within the heart's conducting tissue which makes the heart beat dangerously fast. It can be fatal.

**womb** /wu:m/ *noun* same as **uterus** (NOTE: For other terms referring to the womb, see words beginning with **hyster-**, **hystero-**, **metr-**, **metro-**, **uter-**, **utero-**.)

**Wood's lamp** /'wʊdz læmp/ *noun* an ultraviolet lamp which allows a doctor to see fluorescence, e.g. in the hair of someone who has a fungal infection [After Robert Williams Wood (1868–1955), US physicist.]

**word blindness** /'wɜ:d ,blaɪndnəs/ *noun* same as **alexia**

**work-related upper limb disorder** /'wɜ:k rɪ,leɪtɪd ,ʌpə 'lɪm dɪs,ɔ:də/ same as **repetitive strain injury**. Abbreviation **WRULD**.

**World Health Organization** /'wɜ:ld 'helθ ɔ:gənəz,zeɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* an organisation, part of the United Nations, which aims to improve health in the world. Abbreviation **WHO**



**worm** /wɜ:m/ *noun* a long thin animal with no legs or backbone, which can infest the human body, especially the intestines

**wound** /wu:nd/ *noun* damage to external tissue which allows blood to escape ○ *He had a knife wound in his leg.* ○ *The doctors sutured the wound in his chest.* ■ *verb* to harm someone by making a hole in the tissue of the body ○ *She was wounded three times in the head.*

**wound dehiscence** /'wu:nd di:hi:s(ə)ns/ *noun* the splitting open of a surgical incision

**wound healing** /'wu:nd ,hi:lɪŋ/ *noun* the replacement of dead tissue with new tissue

**wrist** /rɪst/ *noun* a joint between the hand and forearm ○ *He sprained his wrist and can't play*

*tennis tomorrow.* See illustration at **HAND** in Supplement (NOTE: For other terms referring to the wrist, see words beginning with **carp-**, **carpo-**.)

**wrist drop** /'rɪst drɒp/ *noun* paralysis of the wrist muscles, caused by damage to the radial nerve in the upper arm, which causes the hand to hang limp

**writer's cramp** /,raɪtəz 'kræmp/ *noun* a painful spasm of the muscles in the forearm and hand which comes from writing too much

**WRULD** *abbreviation* work-related upper limb disorder

**wry neck** /'raɪ nek/, **wryneck** /'raɪnek/ *noun* same as **torticollis**

# XYZ

**xanth-** /zænθ/ *prefix* same as **xantho-** (used before vowels)

**xanthaemia** /zæn'thi:miə/ *noun* same as **carotenaemia**

**xantheasma** /zænθə'læzmə/ *noun* the formation of little yellow fatty tumours on the eyelids

**xanthine** /'zænθi:n/ *noun* 1. an intermediate product in the breakdown of nucleic acids to uric acid, found in blood, body tissue and urine 2. a derivative of xanthine, e.g. caffeine or theophylline

**xantho-** /zænθəʊ/ *prefix* yellow

**xanthochromia** /zænθə'krəʊmiə/ *noun* yellow colour of the skin as in jaundice

**xanthoma** /zæn'thəʊmə/ *noun* a yellow fatty mass, often on the eyelids and hands, found in people with a high level of cholesterol in the blood (NOTE: The plural is **xanthomata**.)

**xanthomatosis** /zænθəmə'təʊsɪs/ *noun* a condition in which several small masses of yellow fatty substance appear in the skin or some internal organs, caused by an excess of fat in the body

**xanthopsia** /zæn'thɒpsɪə/ *noun* a disorder of the eyes, making everything appear yellow

**xanthosis** /zæn'thəʊsɪs/ *noun* yellow colouring of the skin, caused by eating too much food containing carotene

**X chromosome** /'eks ,krəʊməsəʊm/ *noun* a chromosome that determines sex. Compare **Y chromosome**. ♀ **sex chromosome**

**xeno-** /zenəʊ/ *prefix* different

**xenotransplantation** /,zenəʊtrænsplɑ:n'teɪf(ə)n/ *noun* the process of transplanting organs from one species to another, especially from animals to humans

**xero-** /zɪrəʊ/ *prefix* dry

**xeroderma** /zɪrə'ðɜ:mə/ *noun* a skin disorder where dry scales form on the skin

**xerophthalmia** /zɪrə'fθælmɪə/ *noun* a condition of the eye, in which the cornea and conjunctiva become dry because of a lack of Vitamin A

**xerosis** /zɪ'rəʊsɪs/ *noun* extreme dryness of skin or mucous membrane

**xerostomia** /zɪrə'stəʊmiə/ *noun* dryness of the mouth, caused by lack of a saliva

**xiphi-** /zɪfɪ/ *prefix* relating to the xiphoid process  
**xiphisternal plane** /zɪfɪstɜ:n(ə)l 'pleɪn/ *noun* an imaginary horizontal line across the middle of the chest at the point where the xiphoid process starts

**xiphisternum** /zɪfɪ'stɜ:nəm/ *noun* same as **xiphoid process**

**xiphoid process** /zɪfɔɪd ,prəʊses/, **xiphoid cartilage** /'zɪfɔɪd ,kɑ:tɪlɪdʒ/ *noun* the bottom part of the breastbone which is cartilage in young people but becomes bone by middle age. Also called **ensiform cartilage**, **xiphisternum**

**X-linked** /'eks ,ɪŋkt/ *adjective* relating to the genes situated on the X chromosome

**X-linked disease** /'eks ,ɪŋkt dɪ,zɪ:z/ *noun* a genetic disorder caused by a mutation on the X chromosome which only appears in males, e.g. one form of haemophilia

**X-ray** /'eks ,reɪ/, **x-ray** *noun* 1. a ray with a very short wavelength, which is invisible, but can go through soft tissue and register as a photograph on a film. X-rays are used in diagnosis in radiography, and in treating disease by radiotherapy. ○ *The X-ray examination showed the presence of a tumour in the colon.* 2. a photograph taken using X-rays ○ *The dentist took some X-rays of the patient's teeth.* ○ *He pinned the X-rays to the light screen.* 3. an examination in which X-ray photographs are taken ○ *All the staff had to have chest X-rays.* ■ *verb* to take an X-ray photograph of a patient ○ *There are six patients waiting to be X-rayed.*

**X-ray imaging** /'eks reɪ ,ɪmɪdʒɪŋ/ *noun* the process of showing X-ray pictures of the inside of part of the body on a screen

**X-ray screening** /'eks reɪ ,skri:nɪŋ/ *noun* a method of gathering information about the body by taking images using X-rays. It is carried out by a radiographer or radiologist.

**Xylocaine** /'zɪlɔkeɪn/ a trade name for a preparation of lignocaine

**xylometazoline hydrochloride** /zɪlɔmə'tæzəlɪ:n ,haɪdrə'klɔ:raɪd/, **xylometazoline** /zɪlɔmə'tæzəlɪ:n/ *noun* a drug which helps to

narrow blood vessels, used in the treatment of colds and sinusitis

**XYX syndrome** /ˌɛks waɪ 'waɪ ˌsɪndrəʊm/ *noun* an extremely rare condition in males in which they have two Y chromosomes instead of one. They grow faster than normal, and their final height is approximately 7cm above average. Many experience severe acne during adolescence.

**yawn** /jɔːn/ *noun* a reflex action when tired or sleepy, in which the mouth is opened wide and after a deep intake of air, the breath exhaled slowly ○ *His yawns made everyone feel sleepy.* ■ *verb* to open the mouth wide and breathe in deeply and then breathe out slowly

**yawning** /ˈjɔːnɪŋ/ *noun* the act of opening the mouth wide without conscious control and slowly releasing a deep breath, usually a sign of tiredness or boredom

**Y chromosome** /'waɪ ˌkrəʊməsəʊm/ *noun* a chromosome that determines sex, it is carried by males and is shorter than an X chromosome. Compare **X chromosome**. ♢ **sex chromosome**

**yeast** /jiːst/ *noun* a fungus which is used in the fermentation of alcohol and in making bread. It is a good source of Vitamin B.

**yellow** /'jeləʊ/ *adjective* of a colour like that of the sun or of gold ○ *His skin turned yellow when he had hepatitis.* ○ *The whites of the eyes become yellow as a symptom of jaundice.* ■ *noun* a colour like that of the sun or of gold

**yellow fever** /'jeləʊ ˌfiːvəl/ *noun* an infectious disease, occurring especially in Africa and South America, caused by an arbovirus carried by the mosquito *Aedes aegypti*. It affects the liver and causes jaundice. There is no known cure and it can be fatal, but vaccination can prevent it.

**yellow marrow** /ˌjeləʊ 'mæɪəʊ/ *noun* ♣ **marrow**

**yellow spot** /'jeləʊ spɒt/ *noun* same as **macula lutea**

**yin and yang** /ˌjɪn ənd 'jæŋ/ *noun* the two opposite and complementary principles of Chinese philosophy which are thought to exist in varying proportions in all things. They are sometimes thought of as femininity and masculinity.

**yoga** /'jəʊgə/ *noun* 1. a Hindu discipline which promotes spiritual unity with a Supreme Being through a system of postures and rituals 2. any one of dozens of systems and methods derived from or based on Hindu yoga. Many include breathing exercises and postures which are thought to aid health.

**Zadik's operation** /'zeɪdɪks ɒpə'reɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a surgical operation to remove the whole of an ingrowing toenail

**Zantac** /'zæntæk/ a trade name for ranitidine

**zidovudine** /zɪ'dəʊvʊdɪn/ *noun* azidothymidine or AZT, a drug used in the treatment of

AIDS, which helps to slow the progress of the disease

**Zimmer frame** /'zɪmə freɪm/ a trademark for a metal frame used by people who have difficulty in walking ○ *She managed to walk some steps with a Zimmer frame.* ♢ **walking frame**

**zinc** /zɪŋk/ *noun* a white metallic trace element (NOTE: The chemical symbol is **Zn**.)

**zinc ointment** /'zɪŋk ˌɔɪntmənt/ *noun* a soothing ointment made of zinc oxide and oil

**zinc oxide** /zɪŋk 'ɒksaɪd/ *noun* a compound of zinc and oxygen, which forms a soft white soothing powder used in creams and lotions (NOTE: Its chemical formula is **ZnO**.)

**Zollinger-Ellison syndrome** /zɒlɪŋdʒər 'els(ə)n ˌsɪndrəʊm/ *noun* a condition in which tumours are formed in the islet cells of the pancreas together with peptic ulcers [Described 1955. After Robert Milton Zollinger (1903–92), Professor of Surgery at Ohio State University, USA; Edwin H. Ellison (1918–70), Associate Professor of Surgery at Ohio State University, USA.]

**zona** /'zəʊnəl/ *noun* a zone or area

**zone** /zəʊn/ *noun* an area of the body

**zonula** /'zɒnʊlə/, **zonule** /'zɒnjuːl/ *noun* a small area of the body

**zoo-** /zəʊ, zɜː/ *prefix* relating to animals

**zoonosis** /zəʊθ'nəʊsɪs/ *noun* a disease which a human can catch from an animal (NOTE: The plural is **zoonoses**.)

**zoster** /'zɒstə/ ♣ **herpes zoster**

**Z-plasty** /'zed ˌplæsti/ *noun* a technique used in plastic surgery. A deep Z-shaped incision is made to relieve tension in the area of a scar, or to change the direction of a scar.

**zygoma** /zai'gəʊmə/ *noun* same as **zygomatic arch** (NOTE: The plural is **zygomata**.)

**zygomatic** /ˌzaɪgə'mætɪk/ *adjective* referring to the zygomatic arch

**zygomatic arch** /ˌzaɪgə'mætɪk 'ɑːtʃ/ *noun* the ridge of bone across the temporal bone, running between the ear and the bottom of the eye socket. Also called **zygoma**

**zygomatic bone** /ˌzaɪgə'mætɪk 'bəʊn/ *noun* a bone which forms the prominent part of the cheek and the lower part of the eye socket. Also called **cheekbone**, **malar bone**

**zygomatic process** /ˌzaɪgə'mætɪk 'prəʊsɪs/ *noun* one of the bony projections which form the zygomatic arch

**zygote** /'zaɪgəʊt/ *noun* a fertilised ovum, the first stage of development of an embryo

**zym-** /zaɪm/ *prefix* (used before vowels) 1. enzymes 2. fermentation

# Supplement

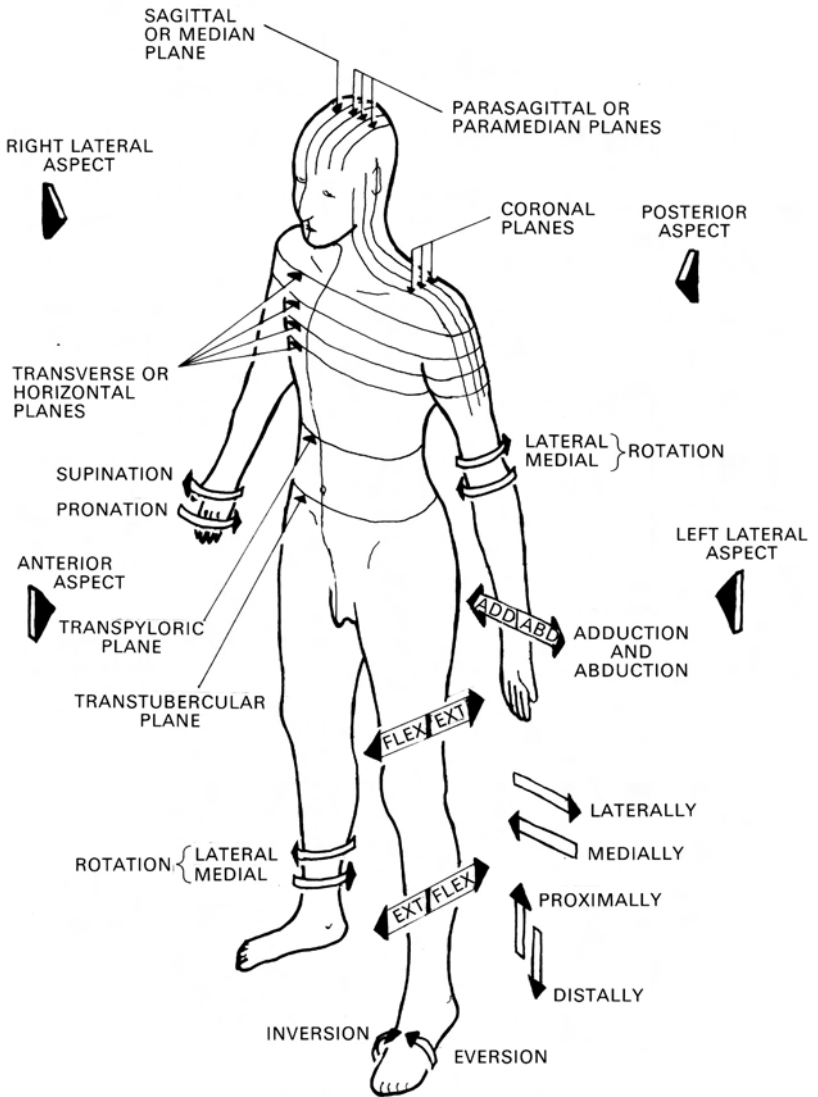
## Anatomical Terms

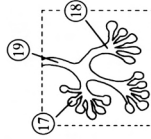
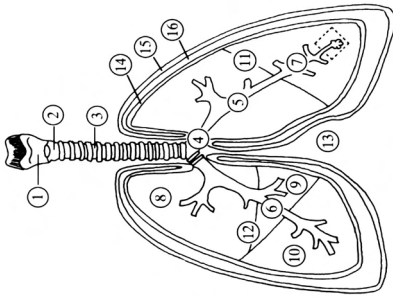
The body is always described as if standing upright with the palms of the hands facing forward. There is only one central vertical plane, termed the *median* or *sagittal* plane, and this passes through the body from front to back. Planes parallel to this on either side are *parasagittal* or *paramedian* planes. Vertical planes at right angles to the median are called *coronal* planes. The term *horizontal* (or *transverse*) plane speaks for itself. Two specific horizontal planes are (a) the *transpyloric*, midway between the suprasternal notch and the symphysis pubis, and (b) the *transtubercular* or *intertubercular* plane, which passes through the tubercles of the iliac crests. Many other planes are named from the structures they pass through.

Views of the body from some different points are shown on the diagram; a view of the body from above is called the *superior aspect*, and that from below is the *inferior aspect*.

*Cephalic* means toward the head; *caudal* refers to positions (or in a direction) towards the tail. *Proximal* and *distal* refer to positions respectively closer to and further from the centre of the body in any direction, while *lateral* and *medial* relate more specifically to relative sideways positions, and also refer to movements. *Ventral* refers to the abdomen, front or anterior, while *dorsal* relates to the back of a part or organ. The hand has a *dorsal* and a *palmar* surface, and the foot a *dorsal* and a *plantar* surface.

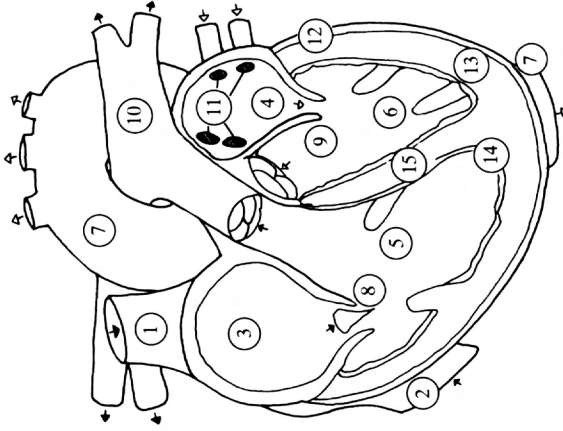
Note that *flexion of the thigh* moves it forward while *flexion of the leg* moves it backwards; the movements of *extension* are similarly reversed. Movement and rotation of limbs can be *medial*, which is with the front moving towards the centre line, or *lateral*, which is in the opposite direction. Specific terms for limb movements are *adduction*, towards the centre line, and *abduction*, which is away from the centre line. Other specific terms are *supination* and *pronation* for the hand, and *inversion* and *eversion* for the foot.





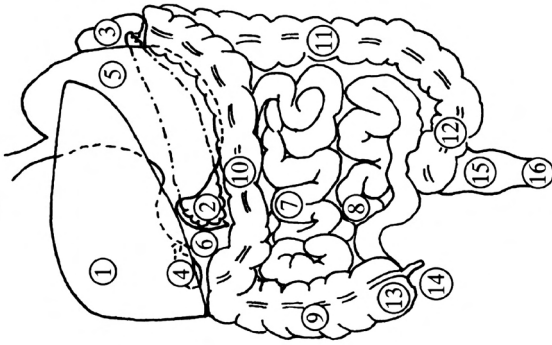
## LUNGS

1. thyroid cartilage
2. cricoid cartilage
3. trachea
4. main bronchus
5. superior lobe bronchus
6. middle lobe bronchus
7. inferior lobe bronchus
8. superior lobe
9. middle lobe
10. inferior lobe
11. oblique fissure
12. horizontal fissure
13. cardiac notch
14. visceral pleura
15. parietal pleura
16. pleural cavity
17. alveolus
18. alveolar duct
19. bronchiole



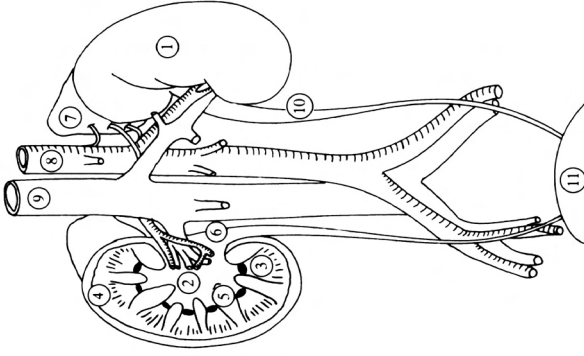
## HEART

1. superior vena cava
2. inferior vena cava
3. right atrium
4. left atrium
5. right ventricle
6. left ventricle
7. aorta
8. tricuspid valve
9. bicuspid valve
10. pulmonary artery
11. pulmonary veins
12. epicardium
13. myocardium
14. endocardium
15. septum



### DIGESTIVE SYSTEM

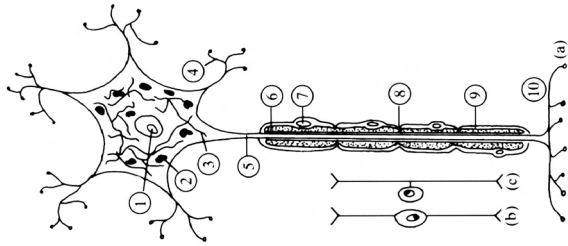
1. liver
2. pancreas
3. spleen
4. gall bladder
5. stomach
6. duodenum
7. jejunum
8. ileum
9. ascending colon
10. transverse colon
11. descending colon
12. sigmoid colon
13. caecum
14. appendix
15. rectum
16. anus



### KIDNEY

1. kidney
2. calyx
3. pyramid
4. cortex
5. medulla
6. renal pelvis
7. adrenal gland
8. abdominal aorta
9. inferior vena cava
10. ureter
11. urinary bladder





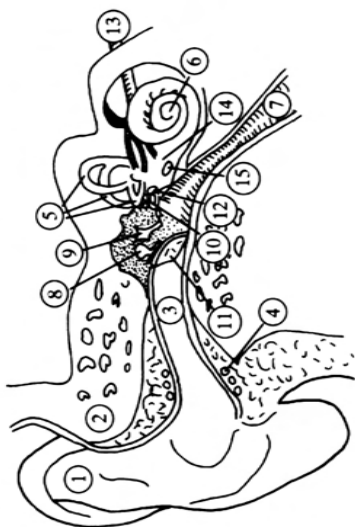
## NEURONE

- (a) multipolar (b) bipolar (c) unipolar
1. nucleus
  2. Nissl granules
  3. neurofibrilla
  4. dendrite
  5. axon
  6. myelin sheath
  7. Schwann cell nucleus
  8. node of Ranvier
  9. neurilemma
  10. terminal branch



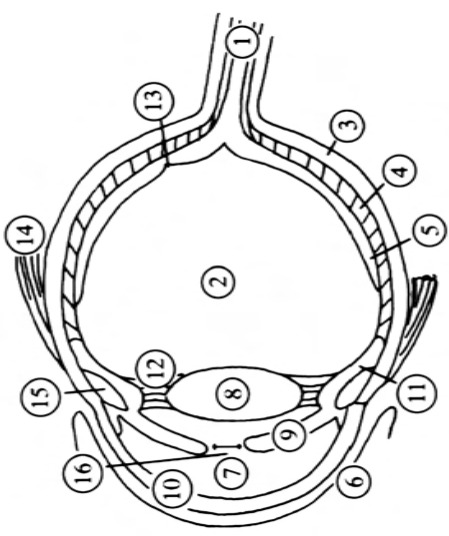
## BRAIN

1. corpus callosum
2. thalamus
3. hypothalamus
4. pineal body
5. pituitary gland
6. superior colliculi
7. inferior colliculi
8. cerebellum
9. cerebral peduncle
10. fornix
11. pons



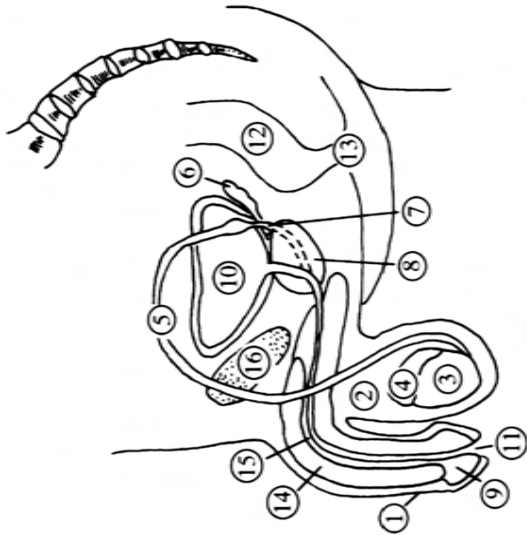
**EAR**

- 1. pinna
- 2. temporal bone
- 3. external auditory meatus
- 4. ceruminous glands
- 5. semicircular canals
- 6. cochlea
- 7. Eustachian tube
- 8. malleus
- 9. incus
- 10. stapes
- 11. tympanic membrane (eardrum)
- 12. round window
- 13. auditory nerve
- 14. vestibule
- 15. oval window



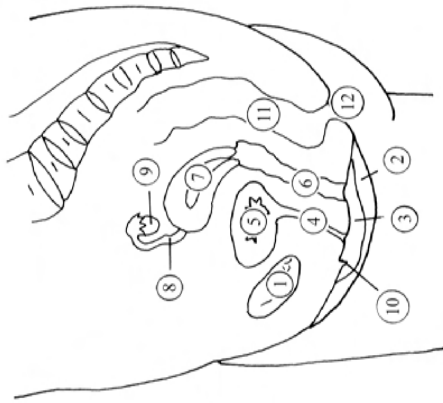
**EYE**

- 1. optic nerve
- 2. vitreous humour
- 3. sclera
- 4. choroid
- 5. retina
- 6. conjunctiva
- 7. aqueous humour
- 8. lens
- 9. iris
- 10. cornea
- 11. ciliary body
- 12. suspensory ligament
- 13. fovea
- 14. muscle
- 15. ciliary muscle
- 16. pupil



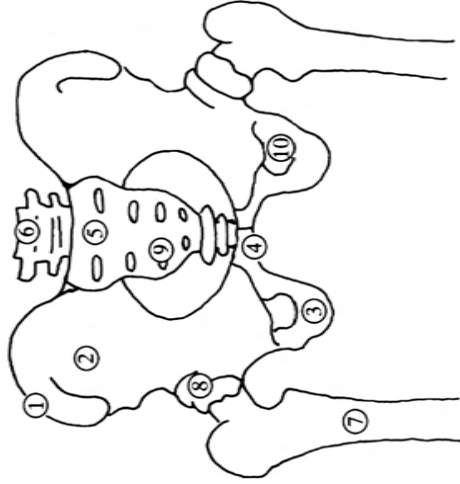
### UROGENITAL SYSTEM (male)

1. penis
2. scrotum
3. testis
4. epididymis
5. ductus deferens
6. seminal vesicle
7. ejaculatory duct
8. prostate gland
9. glans
10. urinary bladder
11. urethra
12. rectum
13. anus
14. corpus cavernosum
15. corpus spongiosum
16. pubic bone



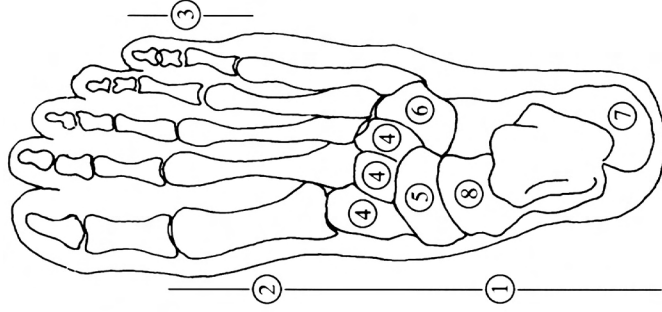
### UROGENITAL SYSTEM (female)

1. pubic bone
2. labia majora
3. labia minora
4. clitoris
5. urethra
6. urinary bladder
7. vagina
8. fallopian tube
9. ovary
10. clitoris
11. rectum
12. anus



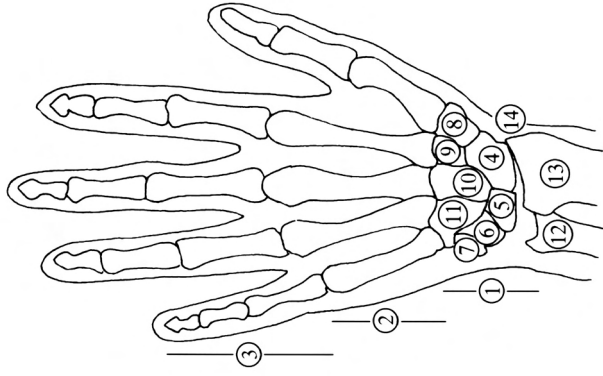
### PELVIS (anterior view)

1. iliac crest
2. ilium
3. ischium
4. pubis
5. sacrum
6. iliac crest
7. femur
8. hip joint
9. sacral foramen
10. obturator foramen



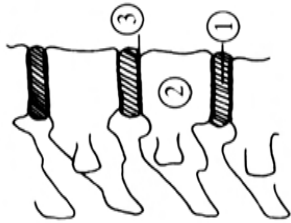
### FOOT

1. tarsus
2. metatarsus
3. phalanges
4. cuneiforms
5. navicular
6. cuboid
7. calcaneus
8. talus



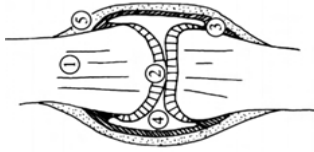
### HAND

1. carpus
2. metacarpus
3. phalanges
4. scaphoid
5. lunate
6. triquetrum
7. pisiform
8. trapezium
9. trapezoid
10. capitate
11. hamate
12. ulna
13. radius
14. wrist



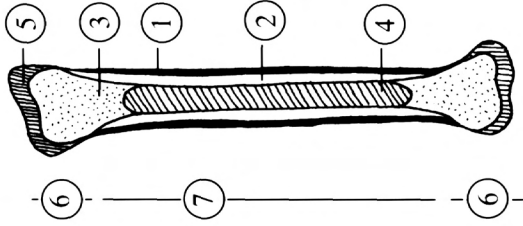
### CARTILAGINOUS JOINT

1. intervertebral disc
2. vertebra
3. hyaline cartilage



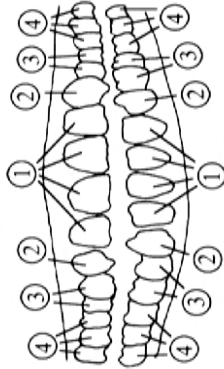
### SYNOVIAL JOINT

1. bone
2. articular membrane
3. synovial membrane
4. synovial cavity and fluid
5. joint capsule



### BONE STRUCTURE

1. periosteum
2. compact bone
3. cancellous (spongy) bone (red marrow)
4. medullary cavity (yellow marrow)
5. articular cartilage
6. epiphysis
7. diaphysis



### TEETH

1. incisors
2. canines
3. premolars
4. molars